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Galilee

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# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY ON SOME GREEK

## CITIES IN GALILEE

This thesis would not be complete without giving recognition to the splendid cooperation I have received from the following:

Dr. G. C. McCown, Head of the New Testament Department and the Director of the Palestine Institute of the Pacific School of Religion, for his sincere, kind, and constructive criticisms and suggestions.

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## THESIS

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| AASOR. . . . .       | American Schools of Oriental Research Annual.  |
| AJA . . . . .        | American Journal of Archaeology.   |
| AJSLL . . . . .      | American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature.  |
| Ancient Synagogues . | Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece.  |
| Antike Synagogen . . | Antike Synagogen in Galilaea.  |
| Ant. Jud. . . . .    | Jewish Antiquities.  |
| BASOR . . . . .      | American Schools of Oriental Research Bulletin.  |
| Bel. Jud. . . . .    | Jewish War.  |
| Beth Alpha . . . . . | The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha.   |
| Capharnaum . . . . . | Capharnaum et ses Ruines.  |
| EB . . . . .         | Encyclopaedia Biblica.   |
| el-Hammeh . . . . .  | The Ancient Synagogue of El-Hammeh.  |
| HJP . . . . .        | A History of the Jewish People.  |
| JPOS . . . . .       | Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.   |
| PEF. Q. St. . . . .  | Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement.   |
| QDAP . . . . .       | Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine.                                       |
| Sepphoris . . . . .  | Preliminary Report of the University of Michigan Excavations at Sepphoris, Palestine, in 1931. |
| SSG . . . . .        | Sacred Sites of the Gospels.   |
| SSW . . . . .        | Sacred Sites and Ways.   |
| Studies . . . . .    | The Studies in Galilee.  |
| Vita . . . . .       | Life of Josephus.  |







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## INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this thesis is the archaeological study of the "culture and conscience" and history of Jesus' times. We shall attempt to approach this through the study of some sites of Galilee during the Roman period from the archaeological standpoint.

A study of the culture and conscience of a particular period may be approached from two different angles: one, literary; the other, archaeological. Literary study reveals much about the culture and social conscience of a given period. But books usually come from a period long after the times. And even where there are contemporary writings, they are usually, if not always, written for a particular unhistorical purpose, from the author's subjective viewpoint. If we took purely historical literature, we should find it usually reporting important events or describing outstanding personalities. On the whole, literature tends to miss the daily life of the masses, and, therefore, the study of the culture and conscience of a period must be supplemented by archaeology.

Archaeology is, and must be, a science independent of Biblical study. But it is a close companion and a helpful aid. Among the contributions archaeology can make to the study of the Bible, its disclosures on the "culture and





conscience" are of prime importance. The excavation of Samaria, for example, revealed the culture of the Omri dynasty period. That of Petra has thrown much more light on the Nabatean problem.

Besides contributing to the study of culture and conscience, archaeology is also a staunch aid in the study of Biblical history (as a whole of which our study is only a segment). An example in point is the Amarna tablets, which reveal the history of the period during which the tribes of Israel "invaded" Palestine. The Moabite stone, another instance, clarifies the international relationship between Moab and Israel during the Omri dynasty. The excavations in Galilee, in the same manner, throw light on the history of the Roman period. Archaeology also aids in the study of Biblical topography, exegesis, and other fields.

Archaeological study also has disadvantages. In our case, the study of Galilee in Jesus' time, we are hampered by the paucity of excavations and the scarcity of finds contemporary with Jesus. A few Galilean discoveries throw bright light on the culture and conscience of his time, however. To circumvent these disadvantages we have not confined this study to Jesus' time alone, but rather have included periods before and after.

This thesis therefore roughly covers the Roman Period. Since it would be too great a task to discuss all the discoveries in Galilee, we are limiting ourselves in this thesis to three important sites: Saffûriyeh, Tell Hûm, and el-Hammi.



It is in these three places that some of the most significant discoveries relating to the Roman period have been made. Its scope is primarily a double one: a study of the culture and conscience of the period of Jesus, and an inquiry into the history of Galilee during the Roman period, both approached by archaeological methods. I also will necessarily discuss the disputed topographic problem of Capernaum.





## CHAPTER ONE

### GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY OF ŞAFFÛRIYEH,

#### TELL HÛM, AND EL-HAMMI

For the full understanding of the descriptions of discoveries at Şaffûriyeh, Tell Hûm, and el-Hammi, it is necessary to survey the geography and history of these three sites.

#### Geography

##### Şaffûriyeh

The tell around which the modern Mohammedan village of Şaffûriyeh is located lies northwest of Nazareth at a distance of about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  km. The village is visible from the summit of Neby Sa'in, on whose south slope lies Nazareth.<sup>1</sup> The rocky tell, disconnected from the neighbouring lowland, is 286 m. above sea level, 115 m. above the Sepphoris plain, and 240 m. lower than the hills of Nazareth. The slopes of the tell are surrounded by modern buildings, except for the north side, where the slope is greatest. The western slope is the most gentle; consequently it is on this side that the village is most developed. On the east side,

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<sup>1</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 74 f.; Waterman, Sepphoris, p. v.



there is a low artificial ridge now used as a threshing-floor, separated from the tell by a small number of houses. Erosion has left the average depth of the remaining debris 2 m. On the western side the natural rock is exposed, while the debris reaches 8 m. in the cavea of the theater on the northern slope.<sup>1</sup> In the Roman period this site was on the Roman road from Acre to Tiberias. Besides this, several old roads used in the Roman period lead to neighbouring villages.<sup>2</sup>

### Tell Hûm

In the west, the projection of a limestone hill separates Tell Hûm from the little plain of et-Tâbigha, a place of springs and fishing. In the east, the Wady el-Webedani flows into the Sea of Galilee. Beyond that, there is another good fishing place at the mouth of the Jordan. Between these two fine fishing places there is a level plain (c. 300 m. from south to north) covered with basalt-rubble, separating the lake from the slope of the highland. Tell Hûm is not on the beach, however, but along its edge. The promontory of Ras Jirnis in the west protects the beach from the west wind. To the east of it is a little bay, now choked up, running in about 50 m. from the lake. No spring has been found; 'Ain el-Oshsheh ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  km. to the east) is the nearest water supply. On this ancient site the Arab is now

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>QDAP, V, 179.





beginning to settle.<sup>1</sup>

### El-Hammi

El-Hammi is located at a very interesting "point where the frontiers of Palestine, Syria and Transjordan converge."<sup>2</sup> It is about 3 km. north of Umm Qeis (Gadara) on the north bank of the River Yarmûk. The plain of el-Hammi is 72.5 hectares in area, 1450 m. long and 500 m wide on an average. It averages 146 m. below sea level, forming a part of the Jordan Valley depression. It is surrounded by steep walls of rock in all sides except the south, where a gentler ascent leads up to Umm Qeis. The River Yarmûk surrounds the plain on the east, south, and west sides.<sup>3</sup> In the northwest corner of the plain stands a hill called Tell Bâni (c. 26 m. above the plain at the south side; c. 20 m. at the north side).<sup>4</sup> There is an entirely artificial hill (11 m. high) about 200 m. east of it.<sup>5</sup>

The famous hot springs flow out at five places, four at the west end and one at the northeast end of the plain. (1) The most western spring, Hammet ej-Jarab, bubbles up from several holes in the bottom of an oval basin, emitting a great deal of gas, and the water flows westwards into the River Yarmûk. The temperature is about 40° C. The water

<sup>1</sup>Dalman, SSW, pp. 138 ff., p. 147.

<sup>2</sup>AJA, XXIX, 321.      <sup>3</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeih, p. 18 f.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 27. Glueck maintains it is a natural hill, JAJ, XXIX, 323.





is beautifully clear, of deep blue colour, but smells and tastes very much like hydrogen sulphide. (2) Less than 2 m. east, the second spring, 'Ain Bûlos, flows into the basin of Hammet ej-Jarab. Its water is sweet and 35° C. in temperature. (3) Twenty-two m. southeast of Hammet ej-Jarab the warmest spring (50° C.) bubbles out of the ground. It is called Hammet Selîm or el-Maqleh, and is reputed to be therapeutically the most effective. It is crystal clear and blue in colour, but smells very strongly of hydrogen sulphide. It flows down in cascades and joins the channel of the next spring. (4) Hammet er-Rîh is situated 150 m. east of Hammet Selîm and about 25 m. north of the River Yarmûk. The water is about 34° C. in temperature. It flows into the river at a place 150 m. from the source. (5) The last spring, 'Ain Sa'ad el-Fâr or 'Ain es-Sakhneh, is at the northeast corner of the plain, about one km. from the first spring. It is colorless, odorless, and has no foul taste. Its temperature is 29° C. It flows across the greater part of the plain and into the River Yarmûk at a place near the 'Ain el-Rih.<sup>1</sup> "The gorge both above and below the plain, and especially the view of the plain from the mountains, are of surpassing beauty."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 7.



## History

### Şaffûriyeh<sup>1</sup> (Sepphoris)

Although no written evidence except coins has so far been found, modern Şaffûriyeh is almost universally recognized as ancient Sepphoris. So far as documentary evidences are concerned, it is impossible to know whether this place was occupied in the pre-Exilic period or not. No pre-Exilic sources contain this name.

The history of this city first appears in Josephus Ant. Jud. xiii, 12, 5, indicating that by the time of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B. C.) there existed the city of Sepphoris fortified strong enough to defend itself successfully against the army of Ptolemy (117-81 B. C.).

When Gabinius (57-55 B. C.) reorganized Judea from a monarchy to an aristocracy after subduing the rebellion of Alexander, son of Aristobulus, one of five Sanhedrins was settled in Sepphoris (55 B. C.), and remained there until Vespasian abolished it (Ant. Jud. xiv, 5, 4; Bel. Jud. i, 8, 5).

Then Herod the Great (40-4 B. C.) captured Sepphoris, garrison of Antigonus, without resistance. He found there such abundant provisions that he was able to refresh his

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<sup>1</sup>Besides the source of Josephus, this section is under obligation to Schürer, HJP, II, i. 136 ff.; Dalman, SSW, p. 75 f.; Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. 18 ff.; Case, Jesus, A New Biography, pp. 202 ff.





army (Ant. Jud. xiv, 15, 4; Bel. Jud. i, 16, 2). He made the city a center for his army, establishing royal arsenals and a palace (Ant. Jud. xvii, 10, 5; Bel. Jud. ii, 4, 1).

After the death of Herod the Great (4 B. C.), Sepphoris became the center of the rebellion of Judas, son of Ezekias. The city eventually was captured and burned down by the army under Gaius, dispatched by Varus, and the inhabitants were made slaves (about 4 B. C., Ant. Jud. xvii, 10, 9; Bel. Jud. ii, 5, 1). "This makes a turning-point in its history; from a Jewish town adhering to the national party it now became a town friendly to the Romans, with probably a mixed population."<sup>1</sup>

When Palestine was divided into three sections and Galilee and Perea put under Herod Antipas (4 B. C.-39 A.D.), tetrach, by Augustus, the former rebuilt the city brilliantly and granted it autonomy. It was "the ornament of all Galilee" (Ant. Jud. xviii, 2, 1). There is no positive evidence to show that Sepphoris was made the capital of Galilee on this occasion, because *αὐτοκρατορία* does not mean a capital. But it is accepted by many scholars that Sepphoris was the capital at this time (from c. 2 B. C. to at least 18 A. D.),<sup>2</sup> because the rest of Galilee was subject to it in subsequent history.<sup>3</sup> Scholars differ on the date of this rebuilding.

<sup>1</sup>Schürer, HJP, II, 137.

<sup>2</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 75.

<sup>3</sup>Schürer, op. cit., II, i, 138, n. 362; Dalman, op. cit., p. 75; Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 19; Mathews, New Testament Times in Palestine, p. 178.



Klein maintains that it was immediately after the accession of Antipas, while Otto insists it was about 2 B. C. But as S. Yeivin maintains, it must have taken a certain number of years, beginning after Varus' capture, i. e., one or two years after the death of Herod, continuing to about 8 or 10 A. D.<sup>1</sup> Although doubtless this city must have been very much Hellenized by Antipas who followed his father, it still remained Jewish rather than Roman; the Sanhedrin survived;<sup>2</sup> it was not included in the cities of the Decapolis;<sup>3</sup> and two nobles were compelled to be circumcised as a condition of residence in the city, when they came from the region of Trachonitis (Josephus, Vita, 23). But when Antipas built Tiberias (c. 17-18 A. D. or very possibly in 26-36 A. D., Ant. Jud. xviii, ii, 3) and made it the capital, Sepphoris was subordinated to Tiberias (Josephus, Vita, 9).

When, however, Felix (52-60 A. D.) was the procurator of Judaea under the reign of Nero (54-68 A. D.), and the latter presented Tiberias to Agrippa II (50-100 A. D.), Sepphoris became the capital again (Vita, 9).

Sepphoris was the strongest and one of the largest cities in Galilee when the Jews revolted against Rome at Caesarea and throughout Galilee (66 A. D.; Bel. Jud. ii, 18, 11; iii, 2, 4; Vita, 25, 45, 65, 67). In spite of this

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, op. cit., p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>Case, op. cit., p. 203.





it took, and advised the rest of Galilee to take, a friendly attitude towards Rome when Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, marched against the Jews (Bel. Jud. ii, 18, 11).

When Josephus was appointed commander in Galilee at the time of the Jewish Rebellion (66-70 A. D.), Sepphoris continued its pro-Roman policy, while the rest of Galilee became anti-Roman (Bel. Jud. iii, 2, 4; Vita, 8, 9, 22, 25, 45, 65, 67, 71, 74). It supported neither Josephus nor John of Gischala, but tacked between the two (Bel. Jud. ii, 21, 7; Vita, 25).<sup>1</sup> Its inhabitants neither praised nor censured Josephus when Jonathan and his colleagues visited the city. While the other villages demonstrated in favor of Josephus (Vita, 45), it plotted in vain against Josephus (Vita, 22). Again the city inveigled Josephus into reinforcing it with walls, apparently to defend it against the Roman army, but actually against the army of Josephus himself (Vita, 37, 65; Bel. Jud. iii, 4, 1).<sup>2</sup> Because of this policy, Sepphoris was hated by the Galileans (Vita, 8, 67). When Sepphoris negotiated with Cestius Gallus, asking him to come or to send his garrison, the city was captured by Josephus and was about to be destroyed by the Galileans (Vita, 67).

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<sup>1</sup>Apparently Bel. Jud. ii, 21, 7 indicates that Sepphoris joined the extreme anti-Roman party. But actually this is a case of "tacking." Schürer, op. cit., II, 1, 139, n. 368.

<sup>2</sup>According to Bel. Jud. ii, 20, 6 in their eagerness for his hostility against Rome the Sepphorites seem to have erected a wall at their own expense. But the Sepphorites alleged their readiness to attach themselves to the cause of



But Gallus dispatched his army when he was asked again by the Sepphorites. After the entrance of the Roman army, Josephus could no longer capture the city (Vita, 15, 71).

When Vespasian arrived at Ptolemais, it was only Sepphoris that welcomed and supported him, having received a garrison from him (Vita, 74; Bel. Jud. iii, 2, 4). After the arrival of Vespasian's army at Sepphoris, Josephus seems to have attempted in vain another attack upon the city, which had been fortified by himself, a city impregnable even to the Roman army (Bel. Jud. iii, 4, 1).

As mentioned before, Sepphoris continued to be Jewish rather than Roman even after Agrippa's Hellenization. But before 136 A. D., after the war of bar-Cochba, when the school of Jannia was transferred to 'Usha and scholars settled in various places, there were only a few schools and only a few rabbis living there. Between 136 A. D. and the end of the second century, there were more rabbis there. And at the beginning of the third century, the central body of rabbis, the Beth-din, was transferred to Sepphoris under the patriarch Rabbi Juda the Nâsî (Juda I), who lived there seventeen years until his death (Gen. Rab., 96; Bab. Tal. Ketub., 103b).<sup>1</sup> This body remained there over fifty years. At this time

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the revolution, solely for the purpose of keeping off from themselves the whole revolutionary party; and fortified their city not against but for the Romans (see especially Vita, 65). Schürer, op. cit., II, 1, 139, n. 368.

<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 20; Büchler, The Political and the Social Leaders of the Jewish Community of Sepphoris. (London: Jew's College), p. 4 f.







the central Sanhedrin was transferred to this city.<sup>1</sup> There was a large Rabbinical school there, which remained even after the removal of the Sanhedrin to Tiberias (Jer. Tal. Hagg. 77a; Jer. Tal. Ta'an 66c).<sup>2</sup> It is said that there were eighteen synagogues and a great number of religious teachers living there.<sup>3</sup>

A large Christian community appeared in Sepphoris, centering around the traditional residence of Joachim and Anna, the parents of Mary, the Mother of Jesus. In the fourth century A. D. a certain Josephus (or Justus), a renegade Jew, was appointed governor there. He celebrated this appointment by building a Christian church. The irritated local Jews caused a disturbance; it was pacified by Aracsinus during the reign of Gallus (351 A. D.). The city was burned by him. Thereafter the importance of Sepphoris declined. In the sixth century after Christ, it was the seat of a bishopric. Two ecclesiastical councils were held there during this century. Sepphoris played a part in the Crusades, especially in the war with Saladin. In the eighteenth century it was one of the forts of Zâhir<sup>u</sup>-l-'Umar, the local potentate. The French army under one of Napoleon's generals camped at the springs southwest of Sepphoris. The modern Şaffûriyeh is one of the largest and most unruly towns in Palestine.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup>Waterman, op. cit., p. 21.



Tell Hûm (Capernaum: Topographic  
Discussion)

It has been greatly disputed whether Tell Hûm is ancient Capernaum or not. Therefore it is only after we have decided this topographic problem that we can write the history of Tell Hûm. Four sites were suggested for Capernaum: 'Ain Medawwerah, Tell 'Oreimeh, Khiret Minyeh, and Tell Hûm.

'Ain Medawwerah was considered because it fits best Josephus' account (Bel. Jud. iii, 10, 8). This site constitutes a better source of spring water from Gennesaret for watering the plain, and in its water live the coracin fish (Cf. p. 16). But it is to be rejected because of the total absence of ruins in the neighborhood.<sup>1</sup>

Macalister rejected the site of Tell el-'Oreimeh because "'Oreimeh is too early for its identification with Capernaum."<sup>2</sup> Actually a fort and a great deal of pottery of the Bronze and the Early Iron Ages were discovered from the tell. And Albright previously concluded, "The Bronze Age settlement covered the entire top of the hill, while the acropolis alone seems to have been occupied after the beginning of the Early Iron Age, and then only for a comparatively short period."<sup>3</sup> But recently it appeared to be

<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 116 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>3</sup>BASOR, XXIX, 6; IV, 12; XI, 3 ff.; XIX, 10; PEF. Q. St., 1935, p. 98; Masterman, Studies, p. 63.





wrong to say that "there are absolutely no fragments belonging to the Roman period."<sup>1</sup> Mader's soundings on the tell, fourteen in number, unearthed Roman sherds (30%), together with additional parts of the old Canaanite city-wall, and sherds of the Late Bronze (60%), Early Iron (only three), and other Ages.<sup>2</sup> The existence of a Roman aqueduct has been well known.<sup>3</sup> But these finds from the Roman Period are not enough to prove that there was a city on the tell, especially when there are other more probable sites.

The other two sites, Khirbet Minyeh and Tell Hûm, have long been disputed. It is only after we have discussed the archaeological discoveries that we can reach a final decision. Therefore here we can not go beyond a topographic discussion based upon non-archaeological evidences: (1) The New Testament, (2) Josephus, (3) Christian pilgrims' records, and (4) Jewish pilgrims' records. The archaeological discussion will be treated in pp. 116 ff. The history of Tell Hûm will also be written there.

1. The New Testament.--According to the setting given in the Gospels (Mt. xiv, 34; Mk. vi, 53; Jn. vi, 17-21), Capernaum was located near Gennesaret. This fact points more to Khirbet Minyeh than to Tell Hûm, because it is more

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<sup>1</sup>BASOR, XXIX, 6. Cf. also IV, 12; XI, 3 ff.; XIX, 10; PEF. Q. St., 1935, p. 98; Masterman, Studies, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>JAJ, XXXVII, 170.

<sup>3</sup>Sanday and Waterhouse, SSG, p. 37; PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 119; Masterman, op. cit., p. 64, p. 25.



naturally satisfied if Capernaum was actually on the Plain of Gennesaret than if it was two miles away.<sup>1</sup>

2. Josephus.--We have two of Josephus' accounts. Vita 72 says that when Josephus fell from his horse and fractured some wrist-bones during his battle near Julias (Bethsaida), he was carried to a village called Capharnocus (κεφαρνωκόν), which is usually identified with Capernaum. Then he was removed to Tarichaeae. This account points to Tell Hûm rather than to Khirbet Minyeh, because Tell Hûm is the first place to be reached, both by land and sea, from Bethsaida Julias (et-Tell or more probably el-'Araj).<sup>2</sup> And the ruins of Tell Hûm indicate a place big enough to have a physician.

Josephus' second account says, "It (Gennesaret) is also watered from a most fertile fountain. The people call it Capharnaum. . . . Some have thought it to be a vein of the Nile because it produces the coracin fish, as well as that lake does which is near to Alexandria." (Bel. Jud. iii, 10, 8). This account of Josephus causes difficulties in identifying Tell Hûm with Capernaum, because Tell Hûm has no fountain. If the spring is to be identified with Sheikh 'Alî edh-Dhaher, several difficulties still remain. Why Josephus could say, "It produced the coracin fish," when no coracin fish have ever been found in the water of this

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<sup>1</sup>Sanday and Waterhouse, op. cit., p. 43; Masterman, op. cit., p. 82; PEF. Q. St., 1902, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1935, p. 99, pp. 144 f.





spring, while it is very common in the water of the lake and other springs, is difficult to understand. How was it possible for the spring to be called by the name of Capernaum, when Tell Hûm is located two miles away from the spring and is separated from the Plain of Gennesaret? Why was it possible that the spring was said to water Gennesaret, when it is separated from the Plain of Gennesaret? The spring would bear more easily the name of Capernaum if it were located at the present site of Khirbet Minyeh, because it is nearer and directly connected with et-Tâbigha. The aqueducts of et-Tâbigha, Tell el-'Oreimeh, and Khirbet Minyeh seem to have watered the Plain of Gennesaret.<sup>1</sup>

3. Christian pilgrims' records.--We have many records of Christian pilgrims. Jerome (c. 340-420) says that Corazin is about two miles from Capernaum. Theodosius (530 A. D.) relates that the distance from Tiberias to Magdala is two miles; from Magdala to the Seven Fountains, where Christ fed the people with five loaves and two fishes, seven miles; from the Seven Fountains to Capernaum, two miles; from Capernaum to Bethsaida, six miles. Petrus Diaconus reports how the house of Peter, just a few paces from the front of the synagogue, had been turned into a church, and how the synagogue had a stair case and was made of square stones. The sayings of Arculfus (c. 685 A. D.)

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<sup>1</sup>Sanday and Waterhouse, SSG, pp. 43 f.; Masterman, Studies, pp. 79 ff.; PEF. Q. St., 1907, pp. 222 ff.



are recorded by Adamnan. He says:

Those who going down from Jerusalem desire to visit Capernaum . . . . go straight through Tiberias; and then pass along Lake Cinereth . . . . and then through the place of the Blessing of the Loaves; from whence at no great distance they reach Capernaum by the sea in the borders of Zabulun and Naphthali.<sup>1</sup>

Being unable to reach the town, Arculfus observed it from an unknown hill. He described the natural feature of Capernaum, saying:

This city . . . . is without a wall and is confined within a narrow space between the mountain and the lake stretching from east to west for a considerable distance along the shore with the mountain to the north and the lake to the south.<sup>2</sup>

In 723 A. D. Willibert visited the holy sites in the following order: Magdala, Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin, and the sources of the Jordan. He reports Capernaum to be a town, "where there was a house and a great wall."<sup>3</sup> In the eighth century, Epiphanius describes it as two miles from the Castle Heptagon, where there was a large church. In 1283 Buckhard or Brocardus, a German Dominican monk, writes:

At the foot of the mountain, about thirty paces from the sea, arises a fountain of living water, which is surrounded by a wall and which is supposed to be a vein of the Nile because in it is found the Coracinus fish which is found nowhere else. Josephus calls this fountain Caphernaum

<sup>1</sup>Quoted in Sanday and Waterhouse, SSG, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in Masterman, Studies, p. 85.





because the whole land from the fountain to the Jordan--a distance of two hours--belonged to Capernaum . . . . . This place is called by the Christians tabula or mensa.<sup>1</sup> From this place, at a distance of one hour, is Capernaum, and two hours from the same place is the Jordan.<sup>2</sup>

Riccoldo (1300 A. D.), an Italian Dominican, describes "the table" where Christ appeared after his resurrection as being two miles away from Capernaum. Ordoricus of Portenone (1330), a Franciscan monk, writes that Bethsaida and Capernaum were separated from each other by the Jordan, and that two miles from Capernaum lie the places where Christ preached to the people, fed five thousand people, and appeared after the resurrection. In 1508 Noë described the site:

Now, if you leave Caperunaum and go about two miles you will find a mountain where our Lord preached and healed the leper; and the foot of this mountain is a plain where our Lord fed the five thousand . . . . it is called the table of honour (mensa d'onore).<sup>3</sup>

All these accounts point to one and the same site. Capernaum must have been located two miles (or one hour's journey) to the east of Heptagon or mensa, to which were attributed the traditions of His Benediction, the Feeding

<sup>1</sup>Mensa Christi was the name originally given to a long stone. But eventually it came to be attributed to the open plain between the hill, where pilgrims supposed the Feeding of the Five Thousand had taken place. PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 225.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Masterman, op. cit., p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted in PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 227.



of the Five Thousand, and the Appearance after the Resurrection. To the east of Capernaum was Corazin, and, separated by the Jordan, was Bethsaida, the two being six and two miles away from Capernaum, respectively. This site exactly points to Tell Hûm rather than Khirbet Minyeh. Arculfus' description of the natural feature of Capernaum also exactly fits Tell Hûm.

But Quaresmius' (1640) description points to a different site. He says, "On the site of Capernaum are many ruins and a miserable disversorium (khan) called in Arabic Minich, six miles distant from the place where the Jordan flows into the lake."<sup>1</sup> This site resembles Khirbet Minyeh rather than Tell Hûm. Quaresmius' was "the first and the only reference in the pilgrim writings to Capernaum,"<sup>2</sup> located at Khirbet Minyeh.

As a conclusion, the Christian pilgrims' accounts are strong support for Tell Hûm, because it was not until the seventeenth century that Khirbet Minyeh was identified with Capernaum, while the identification of Tell Hûm goes back to the fourth century.

4. Jewish pilgrims' records.--Jewish pilgrims' accounts also support Tell Hûm. Rabbi Isaac Farhi (1322)

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<sup>1</sup>Masterman, Studies, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 228. These references to pilgrims' accounts are quoted in Masterman, op. cit., pp. 83 ff.; PEF. Q. St., 1907, pp. 225 ff.; Sanday and Waterhouse, SSG, pp. 44 ff.





says, "Kaphir Tanhum, or Nahum is to the east of Genesareth about half an hour." In 1334 Isaac Chilo went to Capernaum from Irbid, and found it in ruins. He found the tomb of Nahum there. He adds that this site was formerly inhabited by Minîm, i.e., Jews who became Christians. In 1561 we have an account of Tankhum with the tomb of Nahum and Rabbi Tankhum. Rabbi Schwarz (1852) refers to it in this sentence: "This place is now a ruin known to all the Jews; they call it Kapher Tanhum." He also says, "There are three tombs there . . . that of the Prophet Nakhum and of Rabbi Tankhuma and Tankhum."<sup>1</sup>

According to these references, it is evident that Capernaum or Kapher Nakhum (village of Nahum) was identified with Kapher Tan(k)hum. Kapher was dropped, while Tan(k)hum was corrupted into Telhum, and then, by popular etymology, into Tell Hûm.<sup>2</sup>

Some scholars insist that "Minyeh" derived from minîm. And, because the minîm inhabited Capernaum (Midrash Rabbah on Ecclesiastes, i, 8, and vii, 26; Isaac Chilo's account), Kirbet Minyeh must have been Capernaum. But this opinion is not well grounded, because Minyeh seems to be

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 228; Masterman, Studies, pp. 88 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 83 ff.; PEF. Q. St., 1907, pp. 225 ff.; Sanday and Waterhouse, SSG, pp. 42 f.; W. M. Christie is of the opinion that Tell Hûm was derived from τελώνιον, or Telonium in Latin (the tax-collector's place), PEF. Q. St., 1926, p. 74.



derived from munja, rather than from minîm.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen how Christian and Jewish pilgrims' accounts support the Tell Hûm theory, and how the Biblical references and those of Josephus cause this theory some difficulties. The last solution of this problem was given by excavations. This solution will be described later.

### El-Hammi (Hammath-by-Gadara)

The first reference to the hot springs of el-Hammi, i.e., ancient Hammath-by-Gadara, is Strabo's. He says, "in the Gadaris, also, there is a lake of noxious water. If beasts drink it, they lose their hair, hoofs, and horns" (Lib. xvi, 764, 45). Josephus refers to the city of Gadara but not to the hot springs.<sup>2</sup>

More definite reference comes from the middle of the second century A. D., namely, Patriarch K. Judah (who died at the end of the second century A. D.) was there and made the law concerning visiting Hammath from Migdal and Gadara, and vice versa, on the Sabbath. From this fact, we can imagine the prosperity of the hot springs at that time. Some Jews must have been living there by this time, because the

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<sup>1</sup>P.E.F. Q. St., 1907, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup>Ant. Jud., xii, 3, 3; Ant. Jud., xiii, 13, 3; Bel. Jud., i, 4, 2; Ant. Jud., xiv, 4, 4; Bel. Jud., i, 7, 7; Ant. Jud., xiv, 5, 4; Bel. Jud., i, 8, 5; Ant. Jud., xv, 7, 3; Bel. Jud., i, 20, 3; Ant. Jud., xvii, 11, 4; Bel. Jud., ii, 6, 3; Bel. Jud., ii, 18, 1; Vita, 9; Bel. Jud., ii, 18, 5; Bel. Jud., iv, 7, 3-4.

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Patriarch's decision was based upon the previous practice of the inhabitants evidenced by an old shepherd. (Y. Sabb., 7a). The conversation between R. Meir (middle of the second century A. D.) and a heretic show how the crowds visited there both during the "busy season and dead season," and how food was brought there to be sold (Qohel. Rabbah, 5:10, s. I). R. Hama bar Hanina (late third century A. D.) tells about some features of the life there. He says, "We were served eggs as small as crab-apples and delicious as sweetmeats."<sup>1</sup> Origen (185-254 A. D.) says, "Gadara is a town of Judaea near which are the famous hot springs" (Joh. 4:41). Eusebius (260-340 A. D.) knows the hot springs of Ἀμαθᾶ or Ἐμμεθᾶ below Gadara (Onomast. ad. voc. Αἰμάθ and Γάδαρα). Jerome (340-420) is familiar with them, too (Onomast. ibid.). A Greek writer at the end of the fourth century refers to the bath on this site as second only to those of Baīae in the whole Roman Empire. That philosophers and writers used to discuss or dictate at the baths there is shown through his passage about his teacher, the neo-Platonist Jambichus (c. 350 A. D.). One of these stories about his teacher indicates that the most famous springs were called Eros and Anteros, indicating pagan life there.<sup>2</sup> Epiphanius (315-402 A. D.) refers to an annual festival gathering at this site, which he regards as a device of Satan (Haeres, xxx, 7).

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, p. 20.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 20 f.



According to Antoninus Martyr (600 A. D.), Gadara had become the seat of a bishop by the sixth century. The pagan baths became Christian. They were called Springs of Elijah (Thermae Helae). They were famous for healing lepers. There was also a guesthouse for pilgrims.<sup>1</sup>

With the Arab conquest, this Christian name again changed to el-Ḥammi or el-Ḥammah. During the Arab period, this place continued to be very prosperous. A passage of Al-Muqaddasi, Arab geographer of the tenth century, emphasizes the healing power of the baths. It is said that the water was surrounded by houses, each one for a particular disease, and the the hot spring was so effective that physicians were regarded as superfluous.<sup>2</sup> Yâqût, Arab geographer of the thirteenth century, says the same. And he adds that this is indeed one of the wonders of the world. Dimishqi, a writer of the beginning of the fourteenth century, also speaks about the great healing power.

Estori ha-Parhi, the Jewish scholar of the early fourteenth century, refers to the hot springs, but he does not make a statement about the baths. After this the site was forgotten until Seetzen saw the steams rising from the springs in the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1812 Burckhardt actually visited there and wrote about it in detail. Since then it became famous again, especially after the War.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 21 f.

<sup>3</sup>This description of the history of el-Ḥammi is based on Sukenik, el-Ḥammeh, pp. 18 ff.





## CHAPTER TWO

### EXCAVATIONS AT ŞAFFÛRIYEH, TELL HÛM, AND EL-HAMMI

#### Brief Survey of Excavations in Galilee (Fig. 1)

Before we go into the description of objects discovered in Şaffûriyeh, Tell Hûm, and el-Hammi, let us survey the most important excavations, especially recent excavations, in Galilee. Unfortunately very few have been carried out in Galilee.

Unimportant excavations were carried on at en-Nâsira by Custodia della Terra Santa in 1890-1909. In 1923 a cave-tomb was found about 30 m. south of the Church of the Annunciation of Terra Santa. It was found 4 m. below a building, which, in turn, was approximately 8 m. below the surface of the ground. The cave-tomb (6 m. long) contained thirteen graves, six on each side and one at the end opposite the entrance. The graves were of the Kōkim kind. One, two, or three skeletons were found in each grave. Clay lamps, three pieces of glass, and two flint instruments were also found. The cave dates back to the "flint period."<sup>1</sup> In October, 1930, a tomb-cave, consisting

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1923, pp. 89 ff.



of a barrel-vaulted rectangular chamber with a shaft tomb and nine loculi was found near the government Secondary School. Each loculus contained human bones and small objects. The date of this tomb is not reported.<sup>1</sup> In 1936 rather unimportant ancient remains were found near the main road, about 100 m. south of the Russian buildings: a stone press with two square holes for the beams, a reservoir of rough plastered masonry walls of stone and mud, and a round limestone basin. All these objects belong to the late Byzantine or early Arab period.<sup>2</sup>

On behalf of the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft, H. Kohl, E. Hiller, and C. Watzinger excavated ancient synagogues in Tell Hûm, Kerâze (Chorazin), Irbid (Arbela), Umm el-'Amed, Mêrôn, Kefar Bit'im, en-Nabratên, el-Jish (Gischala), ed-Dikke, Umm el-Kanâtîr, and Kirbet Semmâka in 1905 and 1907. Among them, the second and the third from the last belong to the Transjordan; the last is near Mt. Carmel. All these synagogues are very similar. They are of basilica type, having usually three entrances. All of them but two (Irbid and Umm el-Kanâtîr) are oriented towards Jerusalem. The synagogue at Tell Hûm was partially excavated by Wilson and Anderson in 1865-66. They made an incomplete plan. After this, the present inhabitants came to steal the stones more often than before, so much so that the Franciscan Order purchased the synagogue site, and

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<sup>1</sup>QDAP, I, 53 f.      <sup>2</sup>QDAP, VII, 57.





covered it up with earth. After the German excavation just mentioned, Orfali completed the excavation of the synagogue on behalf of Custodia della Terra Santa (1921). In 1925 Orfali began the reconstruction of the synagogue with the permission of the Department of Antiquities.<sup>1</sup> He excavated not only the Roman synagogue, but also an octagon and a basilica, which belong to the Byzantine period (Fig. 6). The foundation of a threefold octagon (dia. c. 25 m.) was found between the synagogue and the lake. The three entrances in each of the three western sides of the middle octagon were oriented to the east, indicating it was for ecclesiastical purposes. The floor of the innermost octagon was slightly higher than those of the other octagons. Therefore Orfali regarded it as a baptistry.<sup>2</sup> The floors had simple mosaic pavements.<sup>3</sup> Between the synagogue and the octagon was found a basilica built of old materials in a later period. Unfortunately, because this building belonged to a later period, Orfali did not excavate completely and carefully. But, according to Dalman's reminiscence, "the long room, in which there were three column-bases, the remnants of the old roof-supports . . . . was on a lower

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp. 7 f.

<sup>2</sup>Dalman objects to Orfali's opinion. He regards this octagon as a memorial chapel, possibly built by the comes Joseph, rather than as a parish church. Dalman, SSW, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 150 ff.



level than the octagon."<sup>1</sup> Orfali also found two rough columns near the synagogue. Dalman conjectures that "one of these buildings might have been the house of the Apostle which the pilgrims saw" (see p. 17).<sup>1</sup>

Because Tell Hûm is one of the cities which we chose as the subject of this thesis, let us describe other remains found on this site. No trace of town walls was found.<sup>2</sup> The ruins consisted mostly of unhewn stones.<sup>2</sup> Milestones, oilpresses, and other implements were found.<sup>3</sup> Not far from the beach the excavators came across a small erection containing a basin (c. 2 m. high, 5 m. sq.). This was an Arab aqueduct, which brought water from eṭ-Tâbigħa or from the Lake by means of a lifting apparatus. But no connecting pipe was found.<sup>3</sup> Tombs were found in the neighboring hills, including Graeco-Roman tombs. Among them was a notable subterranean tomb of hewn stones, now destroyed, thought to be the tomb known as "the tomb of Tankhum" by the Jews.<sup>3</sup>

The basalt synagogue at Kerâze was excavated again by the Palestine Department of Antiquity in 1926. In the autumn of 1930 twenty-four dolmens were excavated at the necropolis on the two ridges 3-4 km. north of Tell Hûm, immediately east and southeast of the synagogue of Kerâzeh, by F. T. Petre on behalf of the British School of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 152.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>3</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 139.





Archaeology in Jerusalem. The presence of numerous worked flints in most of them suggests that these dolmens are of not later than the Bronze Age. To judge from the sherds--Roman, Byzantine, and Arab--these dolmens were occupied in the Roman and later periods as shelters by shepherds or out-castes from towns in the neighborhood (cf. Mk. v, 1). Nearby many remains of stone walls of huts and defensive works were found scattered about. Numerous worked flints and fragments of a very rough, badly baked, red pottery were taken from one of three wells. They belong to the Neolithic or Early Bronze Age.<sup>1</sup>

The synagogue of Irbid had been excavated by the Palestine Exploration Fund (1865) before Kohl-Watzinger's excavation. It was of basalt and limestone construction. Peculiarly enough, it faced east. The columns had both Corinthian and Jewish Ionic capitals. Lately this synagogue was re-constructed into a mosque.<sup>2</sup> Before Kohl-Watzinger, the limestone synagogue at Umm el-'Amed<sup>3</sup> had been excavated by the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem in 1866. The synagogues at Kafr Bir'im had been excavated before the German excavation by the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1866. There were two. The larger one is of great importance because a part of the facade is in situ: three doorways in

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1931, pp. 155 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Masterman, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 115.



the southern wall, an arch and two windows above them, and a column of the porch are still standing. The smaller synagogue had only one entrance in the southern wall.<sup>1</sup> The synagogue of el-Jish proper has not yet been excavated, though architectural fragments are scattered on the surface. About a mile northeast of el-Jish, Kohl-Watzinger excavated a smaller type synagogue with one entrance.<sup>2</sup> In July, 1937, N. Makhoully excavated two chamber-tombs A and B at the southern outskirts of the village. Chamber A consisted of a vestibule, one kokh, and one recess. Chamber B consisted of one rectangular hall with seventeen kokhim cut in three sides. A door and a window above it were in the eastern wall. These tombs are dated as the fourth-fifth century.<sup>3</sup> Part of the facade of the synagogue of Mêrôn, including two of the three doorways, is still in situ. In 1866 it had been excavated by the Palestine Exploration Fund before the German excavation. In 1929 Albright found numerous sherds of the Late Bronze Age below the synagogue ruin, and some from the Early Iron I Age, together with a large quantity of Hellenistic-Roman, Byzantine, and Arab pottery.<sup>5</sup> The synagogue of en-Nabratên is of a smaller type with only one doorway.<sup>6</sup> That of ed-Dikke in Transjordan

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<sup>1</sup>Masterman, Studies, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

<sup>3</sup>QDAP, VIII, 45 ff.

<sup>4</sup>Masterman, op. cit., p. 119.

<sup>5</sup>BASOR, XXXV, 8.

<sup>6</sup>Masterman, op. cit., p. 119.





faces to the west, i.e., towards Jerusalem. The synagogue of Umm el-Kanâtîr belongs to the fifth century. It has only one doorway, facing east for some unknown reason.

So far we have considered the results of excavations of Galilean synagogues. Now we will turn to other excavations. Tiberias was excavated by the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society in 1920-21. Recently (1935) E. L. Sukenik uncovered about two thirds of the foundation of a round building (inner dia. 3.08 m.). It belonged to a period not later than the first half of the second century A. D. It was used during the Arab period as a potter's oven because a thick layer of ashes and fragments of Arabic pottery were found inside.<sup>1</sup> There were the famous hot springs, Hammath-by-Tiberias, near the city. Bath houses, an ancient synagogue of basilica type facing the south with an eastern annex, and mosaic pavement with Aramaic inscriptions<sup>2</sup> were found there. At Mûgharet ez-Zutîyeh and Mûgharet el-Emîreh, Turville-Petre discovered Neanderthal human skeletons in 1925-26.<sup>3</sup>

Practically no excavation was carried out at Şaf-fûriyeh until that of the University of Michigan, directed

<sup>1</sup>QDAP, V, 210; AJA, XL, 162; Religion in Life, Autumn 1936, p. 561.

<sup>2</sup>QDAP, V, 210.

<sup>3</sup>Albright, The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible, p. 60; Petre, Researches in Prehistoric Galilee, pp. I ff.



by L. Waterman assisted by C. J. Fisher, July to September 1931 (Fig. 2).<sup>1</sup> They sunk two trenches, S-I and S-II. S-I was sunk at the northeast side of the summit area of the tell and surprisingly struck a Graeco-Roman theater, which they excavated. S-II was sunk at the northwest side of the tell and discovered an early Christian church. They also examined the building of the fort at the summit, used for a school, the remains of a waterworks system, and cave tombs in the environs of the tell, some of which were excavated by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1930 and 1931. Besides these, they discovered smaller objects, pottery, and coins.<sup>2</sup> All these objects discovered belong to, or are closely connected with, the Roman period. For the sake of convenience, therefore, we shall describe them all later.

At Khirbet Kânef a synagogue was examined by E. L. Sukenik in November, 1932. This synagogue had been built into a modern building. The original building had its façade on the west side (towards Jerusalem). The façade had a small porch, from which some steps lead into the synagogue.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>This site was examined by Albright, C. C. McCown, and Dushaw. They got evidences of its "classical origin" and its occupation until the Crusaders, BASOR, IV, 8.

<sup>2</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. vi f.

<sup>3</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, pp. 87 ff.; Dalman, SSW, p. 116.





To the southwest of et-Tâbigha there are remains of an open rock-cut Roman aqueduct (c. 1.22 m. broad; c. 1.22 m. deep). It brings water from the hot springs to the Roman baths, the remains of which are preserved a little southwest of Tabigha Hospice. It continues beyond the bath, but it is not certain for what purpose.<sup>1</sup> Recently (1932) Mader and Schneider excavated the traditional site of the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes on behalf of the Oriental Institution of the G  erres-Gesellschaft and found a basilica with three naves (c. 51 m. long; the nave with apse, 30 m.; the narthes, 4 m.; the atrium, 17 m.) and a transept (20 m. wide). The basilica is oriented to the east. At the centre of the basilica under the main altar of the choir was apparently discovered the stone on which, according to tradition, Jesus placed the five loaves and two fishes. Between the altar and the apse was found a mosaic pavement representing a basket filled with loaves on each side of which was a fish. The transept also had a mosaic, representing a landscape. This is said to be the most beautiful of all Palestinian church mosaics. Judging from the composition, the use of green and blue colors, and the lack of human figures, this basilica is attributed to the second half of the fourth century A. D., when the newly Christianized Jewish population of Galilee

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1926, pp. 20 f.



rejected human representation.<sup>1</sup>

Khirbet Mingeh was first excavated by A. M. Mader in March, 1932, on behalf of the Göerres Gesellschaft. He found a square (70 m. sq.) fort or palace with nine round towers, and a large gateway or propylaea (4 m. sq.; 11 m. high) in the eastern wall. In March and April, 1936, A. M. Schneider systematically excavated the same site and determined the ground-plan of parts of the building. He found a courtyard immediately inside of the gateway, a group of several rooms close to the western wall, and a staircase in front of the rooms. During the third campaign (March-July, 1937) O. Puttrich-Reignard discovered an old mosque (13 m. long; 20 m. wide) at the southeastern corner of the fort (?), and a magnificent palace adjoining the mosque close to the western wall. In this palace were found two gold dinars of the Umayyads.

The fourth excavation (Nov., 1937--May, 1938) was carried out by Puttrich-Reignard for the Göerres Gesellschaft and the Islamic Department of the Staatliche Museen, Berlin. During this season the palace area was cleared, also other rooms at the southwest corner and some close to the north wall of the fort (?). During the fifth campaign (ending in May, 1939, after lasting more

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<sup>1</sup>QDAP, II, 184; PEF. Q. St., 1933, p. 111; 1937, pp. 59 ff.; BASOR, XLIX, 18; JAJ, XXXVII, 169; A. M. Schneider, The Church of the Multiplying of the Loaves and Fishes, pp. 1 ff.





than six months under the direction of Puttrich-Reignard) three rooms were found in the southern part of the east side interior. A ramp was discovered on the south inner side of the propylaea, leading around the three rooms just mentioned and probably to the second story built above them. But this ramp and the second story seem to be later additions. Five rooms for the use of soldiers and watchmen were discovered in the northern part of the interior east side. Another group of five rooms with a central hall and two groups of smaller chambers on each side were found at the north. In one of the smaller side-rooms fragments of wall plaster with decoration very similar to those of Khirbet el-Meijer were found. Two rooms were also discovered in the northwest corner. In the western side the well of the north staircase and a small room on the west were cleared. A trench revealed that the central court was once surrounded by arcades. Among the small finds, another gold dinar of Walid I, dated A. H. 89 (708 A. D.), is worth mentioning.<sup>1</sup>

Two things must be said of this discovery: one of the purpose of this building, the other of its date. Because of the excellent technique of the dressed stones and the ground-plan of the building, which resembled

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<sup>1</sup>QDAP, II, 188 f.; VI, 215; VII, 49 ff.; VIII, 159 ff.; BASOR, XLIX, 1933, p. 18; JAJ, XXXVII, 169 f.; XLI, 149 f.; XLII, 170; XLIII, 150 f.; XLIV, 142 f.; AJSLL, LVI, 99; Religion in Life, Autumn, 1936, p. 561; Winter, 1939, pp. 103 f.



those of the Roman fort of Limes Arabicus (98-138 A. D.), Mader first thought it to be a Roman fort of the second or the third century A. D. But later excavation disproved this opinion, for the gateway could not be closed, the plan of the interior was not of a Roman fort, and the nearest parallel was the Parthian palace of ḥaṭra. Therefore the building was regarded as a palace, not as a fort. The earliest finds belong to about the fourth or fifth century A. D.; the latest to the eleventh-twelfth and to the seventeenth century A. D. Architectural decoration cannot be earlier than the Byzantine period. Therefore Schneider was inclined to date it in the early fifth century. Alt maintained that the Arabic and Parthian-Sassanian affinities pointed to Ghassanîd origin. This building is so similar to the building excavated at Khirbet el-Mefjer<sup>1</sup> (Umayyad period) in its plan and in the use of Byzantine decorative material that Albright maintains it is "simply another example of Umayyad architecture."<sup>2</sup> Glueck also supports Albright's opinion, basing his judgment on an inscription which reads that Caliph Walîd ordered the construction of the palace, the discovery of two gold dinars of the Umayyads, and the fact that the finds from the lower levels of a trench

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<sup>1</sup>AJA, XLI, 150; XLIII, 15 f.; QDAP, V, 132 ff.; VI, 157 ff.; VIII, 51 ff.

<sup>2</sup>JAJ, XLI, 149.





belong to the early Islamic period.<sup>1</sup> The opinion of Albright and Glueck was further confirmed by the fifth campaign, because another dinar of Walîd I and fragments of wall plaster similar to those of Khirbet el-Mefjer were discovered. Therefore this palace is to be dated in the first part of the eighth century. The discovery of this palace threw a great light upon the topographic problem of Capernaum. This will be discussed on p. 108.

In the spring of 1932 a Byzantine synagogue was discovered by officials of the Department of Antiquities of the Palestine Government on the site of el-Hammi, which had first been excavated by Schumacher. The Hebrew University in Jerusalem resumed excavation of the entire area of the synagogue. Operations were directed by E. L. Sukenik from October to November, 1932. Besides, they succeeded in clearing the Roman theatre and the bath houses, which Schumacher had excavated. They cleared the central part of the theatre, part of the interior and the remaining vault of the bath house. They also dug trenches to locate the walls of the bath house. In addition they excavated near the ruins of Gadara and Muhaybeh.<sup>2</sup> Immediately after this excavation (Nov. 22, 1932), soundings were made by N. Glueck and C. S. Fisher on behalf of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Jerusalem. In 1935, a row of basalt

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<sup>1</sup>JAJ, XLII, 170; XLIII, 151; Religion in Life, Winter, 1939, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, p. 11.



seats was discovered between the Tell Bâni and the Roman bath near the spring called el-Magla. This site was cleared by N. Makhously of the Department of Antiquities in February, 1936. (Fig. 8).<sup>1</sup>

Let us now describe Glueck's excavation and the Byzantine synagogue. Glueck's excavation proved el-Hammi had been occupied in the Early and Middle Bronze ages. Albright had found Early Bronze age pottery on Tell Bâni in 1929,<sup>2</sup> and Sukenik also found a large number of Early and Middle Bronze sherds on the same tell, but nothing of the Late Bronze age.<sup>3</sup>

Glueck found Roman, Byzantine and early Arab sherds on the slopes and summit of the tell. Many Early Bronze age sherds were found on the northwest slope, mainly in a definitely restricted area.<sup>4</sup> He sunk five soundings: one on the summit of the tell (Area I), the other four on the north side of the tell. Area II was sunk opposite to Area I; to the east of Area II were Areas III and IV; between them, the last area. All Areas produced Byzantine sherds. But it was only Area III and in small quantity the last area that produced Early and Middle Bronze sherds

<sup>1</sup>QDAP, VI, 59 ff.

<sup>2</sup>AASOR, VI, 42.

<sup>3</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>On the contrary, Sukenik reports that he found a large number of the Early and Middle Bronze sherds at various spots on the tell; el-Hammeh, p. 18.





that were similar to those found at Beth-Yerah. Many Early Bronze age sherds were scattered just below the surface, but no trace of the house or city wall of the Early Bronze age or sherds of the Late Bronze age were found. From these discoveries Glueck supposes either that the entire Early Bronze age level had been destroyed in the Byzantine age and dumped into the Yarmûk, or the settlement had been limited to a small guard post on the northeastern side of the tell. If the former opinion is to be accepted, the Early Bronze Age sherds found upon the tell must have been thrown away there at the time of the destruction. If the latter is accepted, then the guard post must have been built for the protection of visitors to the hot springs, coming mostly from Beth-Yerah. According to Glueck's soundings, no trace of Roman settlement was discovered on Tell Bâni.<sup>1</sup>

The Byzantine synagogue was found at the west end on the summit area of Tell Bâni. The structure consists of the synagogue proper, several rooms attached to it on the east, and a narrow court on the south and west sides. It (c. 13 m. sq.) is of basilica type, divided by two rows of columns running north and south into a nave (7.80 m. wide) and two aisles (east aisle 3 m. wide, west aisle 2.40 m. wide). The third row of columns, standing about 1.80 m. from the northern wall, joins these two rows. At

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<sup>1</sup>AJA, XXXVII, 170; XXXIX, 321 ff.; BASOR, XXXV, 12; XLIX, 22 f.; QDAP, III, 173 f.



the south is a platform with a few steps leading up to an apse (4.50 m. long, 2.10 m. wide). The apse was partitioned off by a marble screen with Greek inscriptions. Only one entrance, peculiarly enough, is at the southeast corner in the east wall.<sup>1</sup> This doorway is reached through a forecourt and a vestibule. The annex, consisting of four rooms (two adjoining the east wall of the basilica and two east of these separated by a narrow court running north and south), was also reached through a forecourt and vestibule. Two more narrow courts adjoin the basilica: one is approached by a doorway in the western wall, and another by that in the southern wall to the west of the apse.<sup>2</sup>

The basilica and the vestibule were paved with colored mosaics. The mosaic pavement of the vestibule was destroyed except before the steps leading to the basilica. The pavements of the two aisles and the space between the northern columns and the wall are better preserved. That of the nave consists of three panels. Two narrow panels with

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<sup>1</sup>This orientation of the apse and the entrance is peculiar. The former is explained by Sukenik as due to the fact that "the Descent of Gadara" was regarded a natural eastward limit of Palestine for halachic purposes (B. Erub. 22b). The latter is explained as due to the fact that the space to the west was not broad enough for forecourt or annexes. He also refers to one Talmudic regulation (Tos. Megilla, iv, 22) as to be applied to the Transjordan synagogues (el-Hammeh, pp. 78 ff.).

But C. Hopkins is of the opinion that this orientation is the influence of pagan temple or Christian church buildings (AJA, XL, 288.).

<sup>2</sup>Sukenik failed to find the entrance to the room on the east of the apse. The rooms that were at both sides of the apse are interesting, because they have parallels in Christian church buildings of the Syrian type. PEF. Q. St., pp. 44 f.





carpet designs flank the apse. All the mosaics have only geometrical designs except for the two lions flanking the inscription of the first panel from the south of the nave. The uniqueness of the mosaic pavements of el-Hammi synagogue, however, lies in the inscriptions. The first panel just mentioned has an Aramaic inscription (ten lines) enclosed in a tabula. The third panel originally had two inscriptions, but only one of them is preserved (five lines), enclosed in a tabula. The western aisle has a part of a tabula, indicating that originally an inscription was enclosed by it. Except for 'Ain Duk, no synagogue had so many inscriptions. Not only in the number of them, but also in the specification of the amount donated, it is unique; also in the mention of the residence of the donors, especially those outside of el-Hammi (for example, Sûsîtha, Sepphoris, Kafr 'Aqabyah, Capernaum, and Arbela). Again it is unique because of many Hellenized titles and names. The marble screen had Greek inscriptions, as above mentioned. This synagogue is dated in the fourth century or the first half of the fifth century.<sup>1</sup>

After examination by B. Maisler, C. C. McCown, and J. Ben-Zevi, the site of Sheikh Abreiq (Beth-She'arîm), where a Jewish catacomb had been found,<sup>2</sup> was excavated starting November, 1936, under the direction of Dr. Maisler

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, pp. 32 ff.; Ancient Synagogues, pp. 81 f.; QDAP, III, 175 ff.; AJA, XXXIII, 195.

<sup>2</sup>BASOR, LXIV, 38.



on behalf of Jewish Palestine Exploration Society. The northernmost of three large Jewish catacombs in the western slope of the hill was excavated. Sixteen halls each with two to nine subordinate chambers were cleared during this season. They were rich in decoration and inscription (130 were found). The inscriptions were mostly in Greek, many in Hebrew and some in Palmyrene and in Latin.<sup>1</sup>

The second campaign was carried on from May to September, 1937. During the first half of this season, the previous three catacombs were completely cleared and three more catacombs were added. A coin of the Trajan period (117-138 A. D.) was found. During the second half of this season some catacombs in a hill northwest of Sheikh Abreiq were cleared. One coin from Heliogabalus (218-222 A. D.) and another coin from Maximianus (286-305 A. D.) were found. The achievements of the third season (Dec. 1938-Feb. 1939) were the continued clearance of the cemetery and the excavation of a synagogue. A catacomb (No. 11) found later in the western slope of the hill about 20 m. above catacomb No. 1 was superior to the previous catacombs in construction and decoration. On the rock rising behind the court of catacomb No. 11 the remains of a square mausoleum were found.

These catacombs are dated between the second and

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<sup>1</sup>BASOR, LXV, 38; AJA, XLI, 150; QDAP, VI, 222 f.





the fourth centuries A. D. They are of importance for two reasons. One is their decoration, which includes many paintings, drawings, and inscriptions. The chambers, which were very well hewn out of limestone rock, were decorated with angels, human beings (such as human heads, riders, a human figure supporting on its head a seven-branched candlestick), animals, plants, boats, ships, seven-branched candlesticks, portals, the Ark of the Law, oil jars, the ethrog, lulab, shofar, a "snuff-shovel," shells, cups, bowls with flowers in their centers and rosettes around, and various geometric designs. "Beth-She'arîm may be ranked with Dura in its importance for the history of early Jewish and Christian art."<sup>1</sup> The second reason is the fact that important Jewish persons were sent from various districts to be buried there. Many came from Palmyra. To judge from the inscription OMHPITWN, the family to which it is ascribed may have come from Himyar in Arabia. The body of a woman was also brought from Italy. The fact that much Nabataean pottery was found in one of the chambers indicates that the person buried there came from Nabataea, Transjordan, or Arabia. Another family may have come from southern Arabia. An inscribed marble slab, deliberately shattered into thirty-nine fragments, is important as it furnishes evidence for identifying Sheikh Abreiq with Beit She'arîm.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>AJA, XLII, 169.

<sup>2</sup>AJA, XLII, 168 ff.; XLIV, 142; BASOR, LXVII, 35 f.; PEF. Q. St., 1939, p. 127; QDAP, VII, 51 ff.; Religion in Life, Winter, 1939, p. 103. The inscription reads, "I, Justus,



The synagogue was excavated among the ruins of the town on the northwestern part of the hill. Two to four courses are in situ. It was made of large stones dressed in Roman fashion. Oriented to the southwest (towards Jerusalem), it consisted of an interior court and basilica (combining these two, it measured 35 m. x 15 m.), a terrace, and various side courts and side chambers. The terrace (27 m. long, 2.80 m. wide), paved with large well dressed slabs of stone, was reached by four steps from a street. Nearby a Roman coin was found. The inner court was connected with the terrace by three doorways in its southern wall. In the inner court were found fragments of colored mosaic pavement and two rock-cut cisterns flanking the main entrance. The basilica (28 m. long) was divided into a nave and aisles by two rows of eight columns. Two doorways led from the court to the aisles. The floor was paved with white marble slabs. There are some traces of painting on the plaster of the walls. The Ark of the Law stood near the southern wall (facing Jerusalem) between the two doorways. The bema stood near the northwest wall of the nave. Among the decorated marble slabs, a part of a zodiac design was found. About 302 small objects and interesting inscriptions were discovered. This synagogue was in use during the

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the Leontide, son of Sappho, am lying dead after having picked (e. g., the fruits?) of all wisdom; I relinquished the light, the unhappy parents, who will mourn constantly, and the brothers, woe, in my Beth-She'arîm. . . ."

Quoted in AJA, XLIV, 142.





third and fourth centuries A. D. There is some evidence that it was first built in a simpler form in the second century A. D. It is interesting that the Ark of the Law was at the same spot as in the Capernaum synagogue, i.e., before the southern wall between the two rows of columns. But this synagogue lacked the central doorway.<sup>1</sup>

At Khirbet el-Mallahah a station for travellers was found. Between 1937 and 1938 this site was excavated by Dr. Maisler for the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society. The remains of a beautiful building with mosaic pavements and white marble ornamentation were discovered. They date to the third century A. D. Terra sigillata ware and other fine pottery was found. Ponds for manufacturing salt, and tombs of the early Christian era were also found in the neighborhood.<sup>2</sup>

#### Roman Period Discoveries at Şaffûriyeh, Tell

##### Hûm, and El-Ḥammi

As a preliminary, we have described the geography and history of these three sites and recent excavations in general. Now we can enter a description of the Roman period discoveries themselves at Şaffûriyeh, Tell Hûm, and el-Ḥammi.

##### Şaffûriyeh

The important Roman period discoveries in Şaffûriyeh are a fort or palace, a very ancient church, a theater, an

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<sup>1</sup>AJA, XLIV, 141 f.

<sup>2</sup>Religion in Life, Winter, 1939, p. 103



aqueduct, and so forth. As above mentioned, (p. 32), some of these structures were rebuilt into later buildings. Therefore we have to describe these later buildings, though it is not our present purpose.

Fort or palace (Fig. 2).-- There is an outstanding building on the summit of the tell, which is now used as a school (see Fig. 2). This is a Crusader fort. It measures 14.95 m. sq. and 10.50 m. high. It underwent four periods of restoration. (1) Originally it was erected during the Crusades (c. 1200 A. D.), directly on the rock. The western corner and the lowest five courses are the remains of it. (2) After destruction, it was restored by Zâhir-l-'Umar (the first quarter of the eighteenth century). Except for the western corner, only the courses between the ledge and the lowest five courses remain. (3) Thereafter it was restored by a governor of Abdul Hamid (1876-1909) for educational purpose. He inserted in the tympanum of the door a marble slab with an inscription to the effect that he built the place for educational purposes during his master's reign. The courses above the ledge except for the western corner are its remains. (4) The concrete roof was restored after the war. To avoid confusion, I do not describe this later building here, but treat it in a foot note.<sup>1</sup> What we must remember for our present purpose,

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<sup>1</sup>Its ground plan consists of a single room. The three walls (east, west, and north) vary in thickness from 3.5 m. to 4.0 m. These three walls have raised niches with three embrasures, one in each wall. The south wall (3.8 m. thick) has an entrance with two doors in the outer





however, is the fact that when the Crusaders built this fort, they used the stones taken from older buildings or from cemeteries. Most of the cornerstones are Roman sarcophagi, filled with rubble, and dressed with broad margins to adapt them to the rest of the stones. These sarcophagi have the usual decoration. One of them, for example, is decorated by three garlands that separate it into three fields. The central field contains a tabula, and, flanking it, a head of an animal is to be seen in each field.

The remains of an older and larger building were found around the Crusader fort. The stones are so similar to those of the Crusader fort (the lowest five courses and western corner of the present school building), that the Crusaders possibly took stones from this building for their fort. When the Crusaders built their fort on the rock, they had to destroy this previous building. Consequently this older building is preserved only at the east of the Crusader fort. It is a medium-sized building. Its outer wall runs almost parallel to the east wall of the Crusader fort. It includes small rooms separated by four thinner

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and inner faces of the wall. The entrance is covered, and over it is a niche with an embrasure. This wall contains the beginning of an L-shaped staircase. At the western end of the same wall is another niche, built over the opening of a rock-cut cistern (7.1 m. deep, c. 5.6 m. dia.). In the arch directly above the opening is a vertical shaft (42 cm. sq.), leading upstairs through the wall. Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 3.



partition-walls, that join the wall at right angles. Inside these rooms were found many fragments of white stucco painted with flesh-colored designs of pomegranates and green leaves. A terra cotta lamp of the Augustan period was found from Room 2. The area immediately east of this building was an open space. This must have been either a courtyard or a public square leading to the theatre. Cisterns and remains of a rock-cut double oven partly filled with ashes were found on this site.<sup>1</sup> This building is doubtless older than the Crusader fort, for it would have been senseless to add in later periods rooms which are unfit in scale and have no connection to the Crusader fort. The lamp of the Augustan period also proves this fact.

This older building in its turn re-used here and there "slightly larger blocks of drafted stones very typical of the Hasmonean and Herodian buildings in the country."<sup>2</sup>

At the south of the Crusader fort were found a few odd rooms. In one of these rooms (Room 10) three successive mosaic floors were found. About 20 cm. below the Byzantine mosaic floor a very badly disturbed mosaic floor (this is the lowest floor) was discovered. A large section of it lies upside down. This disturbance can be attributed to the artisans of the upper Byzantine floor, or to treasure

<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. 3.f., 28 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 27.





hunters.<sup>1</sup>

Besides these, a great number of architectural pieces of Roman style were found in the summit area of the tell.<sup>2</sup>

Early Christian church (Fig. 3).--The trench S-II (20 m. long and 15 m. wide) revealed the remains of a Christian basilica. Except for the north side, where the hill falls abruptly and where there probably was a narrow road, the excavation is still incomplete, however. The basilica was divided by two rows of three columns, standing on rows of plinths, into a nave and two side aisles. To the east is a rock-cut, almost square apse, with a baptismal font to the left of it. On the north and south sides the basilica was joined by many rooms. Another baptismal font was found in Room 28 at the northern end. Badly destroyed remains of mosaic pavements were also found, one in the basilica proper, the other in Room 40. Judging from pottery and coins discovered in this area, the basilica is of the fourth century A. D. or later.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 30. In connection with the first, or rather with the second floor, traces of a disaster were found. This disaster is attributed to the destruction of the city by Gallus in 351 A. D. (Ibid., p. 31).

Traces of later fortifications were found, one over the lowest tier of seats in the theater. This is attributed to the periods between the fourth and sixth century A. D. (Ibid., p. 30). Another trace above the level of the theater, and on the eastern side of the Tell. This is attributed to the Crusader period, or to Zâhir-l-'Umar. (Ibid., p. 2, p. 31.).

<sup>2</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 4. The whole description of the fort is based upon the same book, pp. 2 ff.



This basilica shows evidence of having been rebuilt upon an older Christian Church. A lime concrete floor (2 cm. thick) was uncovered five cm. below the mosaic pavement of the Room 40. Rock-cut cisterns were found underneath the southern plinth course and the wall that separates Rooms 23 and 28. To this earlier Christian Church are attributed the rock-cut apse, the baptismal font to the left, the rock-cut walls in Rooms 22, 23, and 39. Manasseh is of the opinion that this Christian Church was built "when Christianity was still unrecognized and when its rites were practiced in secret."<sup>1</sup> The later basilica must have been built upon this older church, slightly changing its direction.<sup>2</sup>

Theater (Fig. 4).-- In S-I a Roman theater was unexpectedly discovered. Reconstructed from the part which was excavated during the first season (the stage and the western half of the cavea), this semicircular theater measures 37 m. in radius, possibly with short parallel tangents 1.5 m. long. It must have seated between 4,000 and 5,000 persons.<sup>3</sup>

The theater had an outer circular wall 2.85 m. thick. The wall had pilasters. In the debris were found loose stones and column shafts, which must have formed

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>The whole description is based on Ibid., pp. 4 ff.

<sup>3</sup>But Burrows reports that the seating capacity of this theater was 3,000. BASOR, XLV, 21; AJA, XXXVI, 65.





higher courses of the wall. This wall had a blind arch, spanning the opening of an older rock-cut cistern (no. 8).

So far two doors have been found: one is central; the other is to the west of it. The central door, which is at the highest place on the hillside, has eight steps leading from the exterior to the vomitorium. Two slabs which probably formed two ends of the lintel of this door were found in the vomitorium. This lintel consisted of an ovolo frieze and three fasciae, which must have continued to the doorposts. It is uncertain whether this lintel carried a cornice or not. The other door had no need of steps, because it was almost on the same level as the exterior.

There was a circular vaulted passage (3.2 m. wide) inside these doors, extending beyond the three central doors, possibly terminating at the side walls. No remains of the roof vaulting were discovered. But many parts of the first course attest its existence.

A vaulted vomitorium was found in front of every door, commencing in the interior of the cavea, at right angles to the circular passage. And where the vomitoria terminate, a circular ledge (1.1 m. deep) with a short flight of steps (60 cm. wide) was cut. These steps were equidistant from the two vomitoria, and led up to the seats.

Below the ledge was a horizontal circular passage cut in the rock. Lower down in this passage, small shallow steps were cut in the rock, on which stone seats could be placed. Three kinds of stone seats were found. One is



65 cm. deep, 21 cm. high, and 47 cm. long. This is supposed to have covered the end of the circular passages in the cavea, because its end is moulded in different fashion (straight, cavetto, and ovolo) from the others (ovolo and cavetto). Another kind of seat stone is 50 cm. deep, c. 50 cm. high, and 40-50 cm. long. Some of this type of seat are still in situ. From these we can tell the construction of the seat. A dressed stone slab (22 cm. high) was put on every two rock-cut steps. Upon this was placed the stone seat. The moulded end projected about 20 cm. Thus, the seat was over-all about 45 cm. high, and 60 cm. deep.

The rock-cut steps terminate in a ledge (90 cm. deep) about 14.5 m. from the stage. The space between this ledge and the stage forms the orchestra, leveled down in a rock, and paved with well-dressed limestone slabs.

The drainage of the orchestra and the surrounding cavea was effected by pipes, made of sheet lead (3 mm. thick, 4 cm. inner dia.). These pipes were found under the orchestra pavement in channels (15 cm. sq.) cut in the rock. The water was conducted by these to a central point in the front wall of the stage, and hence by an open channel underneath the stage.

The stage is not yet completely excavated. If it is symmetrical, it is supposed to have measured 31 m. in length, 6 m. in width, and to have been 90 cm. higher than the orchestra pavement. The decorations of the outer face of its front wall have been stripped away. Consequently in the present condition the outer face is very uneven.





Originally the stage had a wooden floor, supported by floor beams set in grooves cut in the front wall. It was supported in the middle by wooden uprights, standing on stone pedestals. The space under the floor of the stage was used as a storeroom or a dressing room. But later large stone slabs (some of them are over 1 m. in length) were substituted for the wooden floor. A flight of steps led from the orchestra to the stage at the east end (and possibly also at the west). Close to this was a pedestal. It marks the end of the stage. A great many excellently decorated stones were discovered in the debris. One base among them must have surmounted the pedestal. A circular limekiln was found at the east end of the stage. This explains how the decorated stones came to be stripped away from the front wall of the stage.

The back wall of the stage has no door, and beyond it the face of the hill falls abruptly four metres. The dressing rooms were at either end of the stage. The triangular curbstone for steps (65 cm. high and 75 m. long) at the eastern end suggests their entrances.<sup>1</sup>

Water works.--- The Sepphoris springs are located about 2.4 km. southwest of the village, and the Bedeiwiyah wells were three miles northwest of the village. But, unfortunately, both are in depressions. Consequently it was

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. 6 ff.



necessary to devise the necessary water supply system.

(1) Cistern: On the summit of the tell there are a great number of rock-cut pits and cisterns around the fort. They vary in size from 1. m. in diameter and 1 m. in depth to over 8 m. in diameter and 8 m. in depth. The smaller ones are for oil or are wine presses, while the larger ones are cisterns for storing water. A number of them are still in use.<sup>1</sup>

(2) Aqueduct: An aqueduct was built from er-Rani. It followed the hydraulic gradient. In a depression about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  km. from Şaffûriyeh there are remains of the masonry substructure (1.2 m. wide, 1.1 m. high), built to enable the water to flow continuously. Six m. to the north there is a ruin of circular masonry (the wall is 1.6 m. thick; 2.75 m. in inner dia.; original height, 4 m.; present height of the ruin, 2 m.). This was a house for the guard who took care of the aqueduct. A little further towards the town, the aqueduct reached a rock-cut tunnel (c. 100 m. long, c. 6.5 m. high, 3.5 m. wide in some places). Then came a small semicircular surface conduit (50 cm. deep, 32 cm. wide). This was built of three courses of stone and coated with 1 cm. of lime plaster. A large rectangular masonry reservoir (22 m. long, 16 m. wide), was found about 1 km. to the south-east of the village. Over 2 m. of its walls are still exposed. According to local tradition an

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 2.





aqueduct carried on columns connected the reservoir with some cisterns on the tell. And villagers identify this with the exposed column shafts on the above mentioned (p. 5) eastern threshing floor. But the connection between the aqueduct and the cisterns has not yet been studied.<sup>1</sup>

Oil Press (Fig. 5).-- A trench (4 m. wide) uncovered the stone base of an oil press that worked on the screw principle. It was located 12 m. northeast of the stage and 24 m. lower than the summit of the tell. This was the common type in that period. The base is a lime stone slab (over 2.4 m. long, 1.1 m. wide, and 48 cm. thick) with two square holes at the ends for receiving the timber uprights of the press frame. There is a circular area in the middle, on which the olives were pressed for oil. This circular plate has a peculiarly toothed rim for the purpose of preventing the squeezed pulp from draining off with the oil. The squeezed oil went through the tubular channel to a little reservoir.<sup>2</sup>

Cave Tombs.-- The Michigan expedition examined a number of rock-cut cave tombs in the neighboring hills. Some of these tombs had as many as three chambers. And each chamber had a number of cubicles.<sup>3</sup> Some of these tombs were excavated by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. 14 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 12 ff.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

not carried on columns anywhere. The masonry is  
 of the type, and all things in this style  
 with the exposed column shafts on the three sides.  
 (2) - a square tower. But the connection between  
 the apse and the shafts has not been studied.

Old House (Hill, 5.1 - 5.2 m. wide)

covered the stone base of an old house that was built in the  
 same style. It was located 12 m. northeast of the  
 site and is lower than the summit of the hill. While  
 was the common type in that period. The base is a large  
 stone base (over 1.1 m. long, 1.1 m. wide, and 4.5 m.  
 thick) with two square holes at the ends for receiving the  
 lower shafts of the great house. There is a circular  
 area in the middle, on which the ovens were placed for oil.

purpose of preserving the exposed pipe from over-heating  
 with the oil. The exposed oil went through the central  
 channel to a little reservoir.

number of rock-cut cave tombs in the neighboring hills.  
 Some of these tombs had as many as three chambers. The  
 each chamber had a number of niches. Some of these  
 tombs were excavated by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Western, Jerusalem, 1930-1931, p. 14.  
Field, 1931, p. 14.

in 1930 and 1931. Sukenik identifies one of them on the northwest slope of the tell with the tomb which medieval travelers regarded as that of Rabbi Juda the Nâsî.<sup>1</sup>

Another cave tomb is reported to have been discovered between July, 1936, and June, 1937. It was found on the north side of the village. The tombs had loculi. Two of them were closed with rough plastered stone slabs (dia. 75 x 50 cm., 12 cm. thick). The slabs had Greek inscriptions in red paint. One word, ψυχή, was discernible. The rest of the inscriptions have not yet been read.<sup>2</sup>

Pottery and other small objects.-- The cisterns on the summit produced complete (or nearly complete) Hellenistic vessels. For example, cistern no. 8 produced, besides a single sherd of the Early Iron II Age, complete cooking pots, water jars, and drinking vessels. The cisterns nos. 1 and 3 also produced complete vessels.

Besides these complete pottery vessels, a great quantity of Hellenistic sherds were discovered. A very interesting find was a large group of sherds of locally imitated sigillata ware of the first century A. D. discovered in Room no. 30 of the basilica. Room no. 28 produced a pot of the first or the second century A.D. Cistern no. 8 also produced two fragments of Arretine ware of the first century. From a deep

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 20, n. 19.

<sup>2</sup>QDAP, VII, 57.





shaft sunk at the northwest corner of the Crusader fort, two interesting sherds were unearthed. One is a fragment of a stamped Rhodian jar handle. The other is a fragment of a mortuary urn, which is impressed with a double stamp. It reads, "Belonging to Dio(do?)tos." This is probably the potter's name.

A whole decorated bone hairpin and a fragment of a thin gold-sheet chain were found in different places near the entrance to the vomitorium of the theater. Cistern no. 8 contained nine large architectural fragments from the theater.<sup>1</sup>

Coin.-- The Michigan excavation unearthed a great many coins, extending through the following periods: Seleucid, Hasmonaeen Dynasty, Herodian Dynasty, Period of the Second Revolt, Autonomous Cities, Roman Procurators, Roman Imperial, Provincial and Colonial, Byzantine, and Arab.<sup>2</sup>

A coin of Sepphoris under Antoninus Pius has on its reverse side the design of a Capitol with statues of Jupiter, Minerva and Juno together with a legend reading, "ἱερα ἁσούλιου αὐτον(όμου)."<sup>3</sup> Another coin of Antoninus Pius has a legend reading, "Διοκαι(σάρεια) ἱερά ἁσυλος καὶ αὐτό(νομος)."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. 22, 24, 25, 27, 27 n. 39, 34. Cistern no. 8 produced the funerary equipment of a woman. The cistern no. 3 produced part of a human skeleton. Ibid., p. 25. For details on a number of small objects of the Byzantine period, see Ibid., pp. 33 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 36. PEF. Q. St., 1918, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>Schürer, HJP, II, 11, 160.

... at the northeast corner of the ...  
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... The other is a fragment of a  
... which is impressed with a double ...  
...

... name.

A whole decorated bone ... and a fragment of a  
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entrance to the ... of the theater. ...  
... large architectural fragments from the theater.  
... -- The ... excavation unearthed a great many

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A coin of Septimia Julia Augusta ...  
reverse also the design of a capital with ...  
... and ... with a legend ...  
... Another coin of ... has a  
legend reading, "...

[...]  
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Synagogue.-- Some remains of a synagogue were found, namely, a mosaic pavement with an Aramaic inscription, discovered in 1909 close to the ruin of a church of the Crusaders' period (which church later has been regarded as being dedicated to Anna, the mother of Mary). The inscription reads, "Remembered (for good) Rabbi Judan, Son of Tanihum, (son of . . . .) who have this tablet." This was paved before the destruction of the city by Gallus, 351 A. D.<sup>1</sup>

### Tell Hûm

The outstanding discovery of the Roman period at Tell Hûm is the limestone synagogue, standing against a background of basalt. It was so brilliantly decorated that no synagogue surpassed it. (Fig. 7)

The synagogue consisted of (a) the synagogue proper; (b) the court adjoining its east wall; (c) the terrace adjoining the southern walls of both the synagogue proper and the court; and (d) the annex adjoining the northern wall. On the west side of the synagogue ran a street (c. 4 m. wide) paved with basalt stones.

Synagogue proper.-- The synagogue was 20.40 m. long and 18.65 m. wide, and faced the south, i.e., approximately in the direction of Jerusalem. The foundations were made of

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<sup>1</sup>Kohl-Watzinger, Antike Synagogen, p. 146; Dalman, SSW, p. 76. On the lintel of a synagogue of the Byzantine period, see Sukenik, el-Hammeh, pp. 43 f. Von M. Schwabe reports the discovery of a Greek inscription, JPOS, XV, 1935, 88 ff.





basalt, while the upper courses were of limestone. The walls were 60 cm. or 70 cm. thick. The outer side of the walls was divided by several pilasters. The western wall, without a doorway, contained nine pilasters. The northern wall, with a doorway leading to the annex, contained nine pilasters. And the southern wall, i.e., the façade, with three doorways, contained four pilasters.

The spaces between the pilasters were not equal. But all the pilasters were almost equally wide (59 cm-60 cm.) and 3 cm. thick. The pilasters stood on Attic bases with high plinths, and were surmounted by simple capitals. A simple sima joined the capitals of these pilasters. The same sima ran along the inner face at the same height.

South side (façade).-- The four pilasters divided the wall into a wider middle and two narrower side fields. The middle field contained the main doorway, and the side fields side doorways.

The threshold of the main doorway, with two sockets for the two doors, is in situ. The frame of the doorway consisted of three fasciae surrounded by ovolo and cavetto, all of which rose from the doorposts to the lintel. The lintel stone was divided into an upper and narrower frieze and a lower and broader field. At the middle of the latter, the frame was interrupted by a little relieved field on which only an obliterated figure of an eagle with outspread wings was discernible. On the frieze there were five figures of Erotes, obliterated except for their wings, carrying five

casualty, while the upper houses were of limestone. The  
walls were 80 cm. or 10 cm. thick. The outer side of the  
wall was divided by several pilasters. The western wall,

with a doorway leading to the street, contained nine  
pilasters. And the southern wall, i.e., the facade, which

The spaces between the pilasters were not equal. But  
all the pilasters were almost equally wide (50 cm-55 cm.) and  
3 cm. thick. The pilasters stood on Attic bases with high  
plinths, and were surmounted by simple capitals. A single  
line joined the capitals of these pilasters. The same line  
ran along the inner face at the same height.  
South side (facade). -- The four pilasters divided

the wall into a wider middle and two narrower side fields.  
The middle field contained the main doorway, and the side  
fields were empty.

The threshold of the main doorway, with two steps  
for the two doors, is in situ. The frame of the doorway con-  
sisted of three fasciae surrounded by oval and cavetto, all  
of which rose from the doorposts to the lintel. The lintel  
stone was divided into an upper and narrower frieze and a  
lower and broader field. At the middle of the frieze, the  
frame was interrupted by a little raised field on which  
only an obelisked figure of an eagle with outspread wings  
was discernible. On the frieze there were three figures of  
gates, obelisked except for their wings, carrying the

garlands. Each garland enclosed a little rosette. The frieze was surmounted by a sima with a profile almost the same as those of the outer pilasters. The sima was supported at both ends by two consoles (65 cm. high; projecting 25-30 cm. from the wall). On either side of the consoles were carved two intertwining spirals along their full length. On their side was carved in relief a date-palm with trunk, branches, and fruits.

The doorposts of the side doorways stood on simple bases and were surmounted by simple capitals and lintels. The well preserved lintel of the eastern doorway consists of an upper narrower frieze and a lower and broader field again. In the lower field are carved obliterated figures of centaurs (?) in the midst of five date-palms.<sup>1</sup> In the middle of this field an eagle is carved with drooping wings. The eagle is holding a little wreath with two circles in his talons. The frieze is decorated by a row of acanthus leaves.

The badly preserved lintel of the western doorway also consists of an upper frieze and a lower field. In the middle of the latter, there is a crater. On both sides of the central crater are palm trees. The fields of the left half are occupied by obliterated lions (?), those of the

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<sup>1</sup>This description follows Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, p. 10. But Watzinger is of the opinion that the figures of the right half are eagles with outspread wings. Antike Synagogen, p. 11.

garlands. Each garland enclosed a little room. The rooms  
were surrounded by a line with a pattern of small squares  
those of the outer garlands. The line was decorated at the  
ends by two circles (85 cm. diam.) projecting 15-20 cm. from  
the wall. On either side of the circles were carved the  
interesting spirals along their walls. On each side  
was carved in relief a man-palm with trunk, branches, and  
fronds.

The doorway of the side doorway - about 10 cm.  
wide and was surrounded by a line of small squares.  
The wall preserved a part of the pattern. The doorway consists  
of an upper narrow part and a lower part of a large  
square. In the lower part are carved the spirals of  
contours (?) in the midst of the palm-tree. In the middle  
of this field an eagle is carved with wings spread. The  
eagle is holding a little basket with two circles in its  
beak. The frieze is decorated by a row of alternating leaves.  
The wall preserved a part of the pattern. The doorway  
also consists of an upper narrow part and a lower part. In the  
middle of the latter, there is a small square. On each side of  
the central square are two small circles. The frieze of the doorway  
is decorated by a row of alternating leaves.

The wall preserved a part of the pattern. The doorway  
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middle of the latter, there is a small square. On each side of  
the central square are two small circles. The frieze of the doorway  
is decorated by a row of alternating leaves.



right half by obliterated eagles.<sup>1</sup> The frieze is decorated with vines, issuing from both ends of two craters.

Above the sima which united the pilasters was a large arch (c. 6 m. wide) between the two middle pilasters. It is an open arch with an iron grating. The front face of these stones had four fasciae, surmounted by an ovolo, a cavetto, and a straight plate. Only the keystone is decorated. A wreath of small acanthus leaves, surmounted by flowers and ending in a Heraclean knot, covers the upper part of it. Inside the wreath is a sea-shell. On the lower part of it, are the outlines of obliterated eagles (?), holding the ends of the knot in their beaks.

Above the arch was a window (102 cm. high, 80 cm. wide). The sill, projected with sima-profile, supported the window posts (50 cm. deep). Each of these had two diagonally fluted half columns, which had Attic bases and Corinthian capitals. (This is the outer view of the window. The inside of this window was decorated in similar fashion.) The sill and window posts have sockets for an iron grating. The window posts were surmounted by a pediment with a shell in its center, and ivy and tendrils above its two acroteria.

Probably there were two other windows in the upper part of the façade to light the gallery. And there may have been two other windows, each above the two side doorways to

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<sup>1</sup>Orfali identifies the figure of the right half as lions. Capharnaum, p. 43, Fig. 67.



light the aisles.

Above the middle window just mentioned ran a frieze. The horizontal frieze was interrupted at the middle by an arched frieze which corresponds to the great window-arch. These stones were decorated from bottom to top by a smooth, narrow band, an ovolo, and acanthus leaves. From the acanthus leaves emerge obliterated foreparts of lions, facing either right or left.<sup>1</sup>

The frieze was surmounted by a cornice, decorated with an egg-and-dart pattern, a dentil band, a Lesbian cyma, and a projecting plate with astragal, whose lower part had rosettes and consoles alternately, enumerating from bottom to top.

The pediment was decorated in the same way as the cornice, but with the addition of a sima carved alternately with palmettes and acanthus leaves.

East Side.-- A post of a doorway is in situ between the fourth and fifth pilasters, which doorway led from the synagogue to the court. Two Corinthian capitals were found (one is 60 cm. high, the other 50 cm. high). They surmounted the doorposts.

The lintel (80 cm. high) of this doorway, which is broken into two fragments, has sockets for doorwings corresponding to those in the threshold. Its front face is

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<sup>1</sup>With two exceptions: the horizontal stone no. V. has no animal figure. The arched stone no. XI is the key-stone. The complete face is occupied by the whole body of a lion, together with two very tiny acanthus leaves. Kohl-Watzinger, Antike Synagogen, pp. 16 ff.



Above the middle window just mentioned was a window.

A horizontal frieze was interspersed at the middle by an  
traced frieze which corresponded to the great windows.  
The spaces were decorated from bottom to top by a mosaic,  
narrow band, an oval, and a central frieze. From the lower  
thus leaves emerge obliterated fragments of lions, facing

and a projecting plate with a central, whose lower part had  
rosettes and consoles alternately, emanating from bottom  
to top.

The pediment was decorated in the same way as the  
cornice, but with the addition of a small central ornament.

East Side. - A part of a doorway is in the middle  
the fourth and fifth pilasters, which doorway led from the  
synagogue to the court. Two Corinthian columns were found  
(one is 60 cm. high, the other 50 cm. high). They surrounded

The central (60 cm. high) of which doorway, which  
looked into two fragments, has rosettes and columns  
bordering to those in the courtyard. The front door is

With two exceptions, the horizontal frieze is  
no actual frieze. The central is a frieze of  
lions. The capitals are in the shape of a lion's head.  
Lion, together with two very large animals, lions.  
Lion, together with two very large animals, lions.



surrounded, and also divided vertically into three fields, by a broad guilloche. The fields of both sides have flowers with nine petals differently executed, flanked by erect acanthus leaves. In the central field are two concentric wreaths with bands.

No remains of windows were found on this side, except for a sill, which was found in the neighborhood of the doorway. This sill has sockets for bars, and for the insertion of window posts. It is thought to be part of a window which opened above the doorway just mentioned.

North Side.-- A doorway was found in this side, which led to the annex. In the nave a fragment of a conche and a window-post, on which two little half columns were carved in relief, were discovered. The window post has sockets for bars. These remains indicate the existence of a window (1.02 m. high, 1.42 m. broad) similar to that in the southern wall.

West Side.-- No doorway was found, in spite of the street running along this wall. And possibly there was no window on this side, for climatic reasons.<sup>1</sup>

Interior.-- The floor of the interior of the synagogue proper was paved with limestone flags of various sizes (20 cm.-24 cm. thick), resting on a bed of small basalt stones. Extending the whole length of the east and west wall, there

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<sup>1</sup>According to Watzinger, something like a door, threshold, or window sill was found in the middle of this side. It also had sockets. Antike Synagogen, pp. 7 f.



there were two rows of benches one above the other (43 cm.--46 cm. high, 54 cm.--56 cm. wide). There was a seat of honor in the synagogue. It is still in situ in the upper row in the southwest corner. It has a back-rest carved out of the same stone as the seat. The front of this stone is decorated with the relief of a head with dishevelled hair. The walls above the benches were originally probably stuccoed and decorated with vari-colored tempura. Some colored tempura fragments were found among the ruins. A large section of the white plaster is in situ on the northern wall, in places as thick as 6 cm.

The floor was divided by two rows of stylobate (9--14 cm. high, 89 cm. wide) into a nave (8.38 m. wide) and two aisles on the east and west sides (3.56 m. wide). These two rows of stylobate were united at the north end by another row. The space between the northern wall and the stylobate was 2.29 m. wide. On top of the stylobate were rectangular pedestals (96 cm. high), composed of a short shaft with foot and crowning. The two corner pedestals were of different form. The inner angles of their square form were cut away, forming two half pedestals. On the pedestals rested bases of columns (c. 30 cm.). The columns are 62 cm. in diameter below, 58 cm. above, and 3.76 m. high. Corresponding to the form of the two corner pedestals, the bases and shafts of the two corner columns are heart-shaped. The capitals (70 cm.--81 cm. high) are Corinthian. The epistyle united the columns. The epistyle





contains, from below, three fasciae separated by a fillet, ovolo, cavetto, and another smooth broad ovolo. In the soffit is carved a cavetto as a frame for a narrow fillet projecting to the same level as the surface of the stone. In the back of the epistyle are four square notches<sup>1</sup> for the ends of the wooden beams, the other ends of which rested on the walls of the house. Upon this epistyle was another sima. Its profile is similar to that of the sima that united the outer pilasters of the walls. From the structures so far mentioned, Sukenik calculates the height of the lateral aisles as follows:<sup>2</sup>

|  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Stylobate and pedestal . . . . .                                     | about 1.30 m.                  |
| Columns . . . . .  | about 3.75 m.                  |
| Capitals . . . . .   | about 0.70 m.                  |
| Epistyle (excluding the notches designed for<br>the beams) . . . . . | about 0.67 m.<br>about 6.42 m. |

Gallery.-- A gallery with rows of columns rested upon the lower rows of columns. Its existence is evidenced by the different types of columns and capitals which were found among the ruins of the synagogue. The columns were 62.5 cm. in diameter below and 49 cm. above (c. 10 cm. narrower than the lower columns). The capitals were similar to those of the outer pilasters. No bases that fit this row of columns were found, suggesting the fact that the columns stood

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<sup>1</sup>Watzinger counts seven notches and measures 22 cm. high, 15 cm. deep, and 18 cm. wide. Antike Synagogen, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>Ancient Synagogues, p. 14.



directly on the entablature above the lower columns. The epistyle of the upper rows is smaller than that of the lower rows (0.76 m. high). Its profile consists, from below, of three fasciae separated by a Lesbian cyma, and an ovolo, a cavetto, and a straight plate. In the soffit of the epistyle are carved the same Lesbian cyma and narrow strip. In the back are likewise notches for the ends of the wooden beams. Above the epistyle were the rafters. The height of the gallery was approximately 3.50 m.

The eastern and western walls of the gallery contained pilasters with Attic bases and Corinthian capitals. (But it is not certain whether the northern wall contained them.) No stone from an epistyle but many frieze stones have been found. Therefore a frieze must have rested directly upon the pilasters. While the frieze of the façade has animal figures, that of the eastern and western inner wall has no animal figures. The frieze stones are decorated with circles of acanthus stalks and leaves. The circles contained plant or geometrical motives. For example, one stone has, from the left to right, a flower composed of five acanthus leaves, a hexagram, a six-petalled star-like rosette within a hexagon of leaves, and a five-petalled flower. Another stone has a flower of seven petals, a five-petalled flower, three clusters of grapes, and three pomegranates. Some frieze stones have projecting sections, which ought to come directly above the pilaster capitals. The projections were decorated with reliefs: a heptagram





with Amazons' targets between its points, a sunflower, an amphora with two clusters of grapes, a hexapetalon whose members are folded clockwise, and another counterclockwise. The cornice of the eastern and western walls is carved out of the same stone as the frieze. It contains, from below, an egg-and-dart, a dentil band, an astragal, and a broader field of acanthus leaves and palmettes arranged alternately.

The frieze of the north wall is made of different stone from the cornice and has different ornamentation. This side has animal figures. One cornice stone has a lower field, decorated with egg-and-dart, dentil band, astragal, and sima patterns. This sima is decorated with a half palmette at the left end. To the right of it are two eagles, carrying the ends of a garland in their beaks. To the right of these eagles, a sea-horse is carved. On its right is half of an acanthus leaf. Another frieze is decorated with a carriage in the form of a little temple with only two wheels visible at the right end, where the frieze is broken. To the left of it are three half-acanthus leaves out of which obliterated lions (?) emerge.

Ark.-- Inside the nave, in front of the south wall, were found various stones which originally belonged to the Ark of the Law. To judge from the place where these were found, the ark must have been in front of the southern wall. Two shells (74 cm. wide) were above the openings of the Ark. The frieze above the shells is made of the same stone as



the shells. The fact that this frieze extended towards both sides is evidenced by the existence of horizontal fragments of a frieze. This frieze has similar decorations to those of the façade: foreparts of obliterated lions emerging from a half-wreath of acanthus leaves. Both arched and horizontal parts of the frieze were surmounted by a cornice, which is decorated, from below, with an egg-and-dart, a dentil band, waves and an astragal. The shells were surmounted by a pediment. To this structure of the Ark belonged two statues of lions.<sup>1</sup>

Courtyard.-- The courtyard is a trapezoid (13.34 m. side at the north, 11.26 m. at the south). Orfali discovered several lintels of gates which lead into the courtyard. But only three of them fit particular gates. Others were assigned according to the place where they were found.

South Side.-- The south side had two doorways: the main doorway (1.63 m.) at the middle of the wall and another to its left. The well-preserved lintel (2.46 m. long, 64 m. broad) of the main doorway has three fasciae which rose up from the doorposts. The fasciae are interrupted at the middle by an Ark of the Law, to the right side of which is a rosette and to the left a palm branch and a garland. The frieze is decorated with a row of elongated eggs set in rings to the right from the Ark, and acanthus leaves in the shape of palmettes to the left. The lintel (c. 1.25 m.) of

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, Beth Alpha, p. 33.





the other doorway is badly preserved.

East Side.-- According to Orfali, the east side had three doorways about 5.60 m. apart. It is difficult to understand why there were so many doorways in this side, where the slope was so steep as to make the approach inconvenient.<sup>1</sup> A doorpost which apparently belonged to the central doorway (1.70 m. wide) of this side is carved as a column surmounted by Corinthian capitals. The lintel of this doorway (1.73 m. long, 0.55 m. broad) is surrounded by a vine-branch with leaves and clusters, which again vertically divide the lintel into three equal fields. These three fields are completely obliterated, suggesting that they were occupied by figures. The outer sides of a doorpost which must have belonged to the southern doorway (1.35 m. wide) have three fasciae, surmounted by an ovolo and a cavetto, which rise up to the lintel (2.45 m. long, 0.55 m. broad). The lintel is badly preserved. The well-preserved lintel (1.92 m. long, 0.65 m. broad) of the northern doorway of this side has, from the inside, a narrow fascia, an ovolo, and two more fasciae, that rose up from the doorposts, interrupted at the middle by a vase with an acanthus leaf and a cluster. Both sides of this vase are obliterated.

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<sup>1</sup>Dalman regards the courtyard as built later in order to make the eastern approach to the synagogue easier. This is why so many doorways were made. He supposes that originally the eastern entrance must have had stairs. SSW, p. 146.



North Side.-- The north side had three doorways. The central doorway (1.78 m.) had two doorposts in the form of columns with capitals similar to those of the outer pilasters of the synagogue proper. The lintel (2.75 m. long, 0.75 m. broad) of this doorway was decorated in a design similar to that of the doorway which leads from the synagogue proper to the court. The well-preserved lintel (1.83 m. long, 0.64 wide) of the eastern doorway (1.26 m. side) of this side is surrounded except for the lower side by (from inside): a narrow fascia, an ovolo, a cavetto, and another broader fascia, which rise up from the doorposts. The field enclosed by these frames has a shell in the middle, flanked by two wreaths of different size surmounted by little flowers. These wreaths contain flowers and are connected by a long ribbon. The badly preserved lintel (0.69 m. broad) of the western doorway (1.25 m. wide) of this side is likewise surrounded on three sides by a fascia, an ovolo, a cavetto, and a broader fascia. The field enclosed by them is decorated with one strip of meander pattern.

Walls.-- The walls of the court were divided by projecting pilasters into several fields, as were the walls of the synagogue proper.

Interior.-- The floor of the court was paved, as was the synagogue proper, with large slabs of stone. The floor was surrounded on three sides (north, east, and south) by three rows of stylobate (84 cm. wide). The width of the





spaces between the stylobate and the walls is 3.50 m. on the south side, 3.24 m. on the east, and about 2.5 m. on the north. As in the synagogue proper, pedestals (1.20 m. high) surmount the stylobate. Columns surmount the pedestals. Capitals surmount the columns. The pedestals are just like those of the synagogue, except for a little difference in size. At the northeastern and southeastern corners, as in the synagogue proper, the inner angles of the stylobate were cut off, and the pedestals, columns, and capitals were heart-shaped. All the columns are not of the same form, and are inferior in workmanship to those of the synagogue proper. One Corinthian corner capital had a six-pointed star instead of caliculi. Another Corinthian capital was decorated on four sides with an olive branch, a pomegranate, a wreath, and a seven-branched candlestick. Many parts of the epistyle (85 cm. high, 66 cm. broad) which united the columns were found. Because no frieze stones were found, it may be assumed that the roof of the portico rested directly upon the epistyle. Three stone vessels (c. 70 cm. high, 66 cm. wide above, 33 cm. wide below) were discovered.

Terrace.-- In front of the façade, where the ground is sloping, a terrace (3.30 m. wide) was constructed, extending the whole length of the southern walls of the synagogue proper and the courtyard. The floor is paved with smooth slabs of limestone (20-40 cm. high). At the southern edge of the terrace is a rough strip (c. 40 cm. wide) indicating



the existence of a balustrade running the entire length. At both ends are staircases. The western staircase contained only four broad steps ( $55\frac{1}{2}$  cm. wide), while the eastern one contained, according to Watzinger, thirteen steps (31 cm.-22 cm. wide), because of the steep slope.<sup>1</sup>

Annex.-- At the western end of the northern wall of the synagogue proper a square annex (inside, 3.50 sq.) adjoined. A small doorway led to the synagogue proper. The roof was supported by four limestone pillars. Basalt staircases, leading to the gallery, had been added on the east and west sides of the outer walls of this annex. Inside were found many fragments of glass vessels and large earthen jars for oil. Therefore this annex must have been a storeroom of the synagogue.<sup>2</sup>

The date of the synagogue is in dispute. There are three theories: those presented by Watzinger, Orfali, and Duncan. Let us summarize them.

Watzinger argues that all of the Galilean synagogues represent a late and debased form of Hellenic architecture. They are strikingly similar to many pagan temples and other edifices in the neighborhood, such as the Praetorium of el-musmîyye (168-9), the Basilica and Palace of Shaḡḡa (undated),

<sup>1</sup>The number of steps of the eastern staircase is not certain. Orfali counted sixteen (see his ground-plan). Dalman counted ten. SSW, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup>The whole description of this synagogue is under obligation to Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp. 7 ff.; Kohl-Watzinger, Antike Synagogen, pp. 4 ff.





the Temple of el-Mushennef (171), the Tychaion of es-Sanamên (191-2), the Temple of 'Atîl (211), and el-Kanawât (undated).<sup>1</sup> Therefore the synagogues and the pagan buildings must belong to the same period. As many of the pagan buildings are dated by inscriptions and other historical records, the synagogues must have been built at the end of the second or the beginning of the third century. This similarity between the synagogues and pagan buildings is to be accounted for by conjecturing that the synagogues were built in a period when the Jews were given various favors. In fact, historical references<sup>2</sup> evidence that favors were shown during the reigns of Severus (193-211 A. D.) and Caracalla (211-217 A. D.). Watzinger thinks that the erection of so many Galilean synagogues in the same period on the same plan indicates that the construction must have been organized by the central authority with resources similarly provided. The architects of the neighboring pagan temples were employed for this purpose. This Roman aid also explains why the Capernaum synagogue was not

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<sup>1</sup>Biblica, 1925, p. 111.

<sup>2</sup>Jerome, PL, 25, 570; Ulpian, Digesta de decurionibus, i, 50, t. 2, 3, 3. An inscription discovered by Renan says that the Jewish community of Kaisun in Upper Galilee erected an exvoto in a pagan temple to Severus, his sons Antoninus and Geta and his daughter Julia. The Talmudic writers boast of the favor given to Jehuda I Han-Nasi. Some rebuke Galilean rabbis for their unpatriotic loyalty to Rome. Some refer to Antoninus Romanus' (Caracalla) donation of a candela-brum to a synagogue. Some mention a synagogue of Severus in Rome. Biblica, 1925, p. 108.



built at the highest place in the city, and why the orientation is contrary to Jewish regulation (east-west).

Orfali insists that it was impossible in the third century, when Pharisaism was strong, to go contrary to rabbinical regulations regarding the prohibition of the use of figures, orientation in the same direction as the Temple (east-west) and location at the highest place in a town. He believes that these irregularities point to the period of Herod Antipas when the Galilean Jews were not so intolerant as at a later period. The general disposition of the building has nothing which contradicts ascribing it to the Herodian period.<sup>1</sup> In conclusion he maintains that this is the synagogue which the centurion of Lk. iii, 5 built for the Jews. He thinks that this noble officer was recognized by a Tannaitic halakha as the founder of this synagogue. He points to the Tosephta Megilla iii, quoted by Bacher. There it speaks of bequests to a synagogue made by Gentiles. He maintains that the obliteration of the figures was carried out at the same time as Josephus' destruction of the palace of Herod Antipas in Tiberias in 66 A. D.<sup>2</sup>

Duncan's opinion is a combination of these two theories. He maintains that before the later addition of the structure

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<sup>1</sup>So far, I am under obligation to Biblica, 1925, pp. 107 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Dalman, SSW, pp. 140 f.





of the Ark of the Law the worshippers must have prayed facing north, indicating that the synagogue was built before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. The mixture of Roman and Hebrew masonry and ornamentation points to such circumstances as those of Lk. vii, 5. Therefore his conclusion is that the synagogue was originally built by the Roman centurion. He believes that the portico was the only part roofed over in this original building, the nave being open to the sky. When the Sanhedrin of Judaism was removed from Jamnia to Tiberias (c. 135 A. D.), Rabbinism became so intolerant to Roman influence in Galilee that the figures of the Capernaum synagogue were obliterated. About this time the synagogue underwent reconstruction. The women's gallery and the structure of the Ark of the Law were added. This fact is evidenced by the type of masonry and ornamentation different from the original building. The ornamentation of the gallery and the structure of the Ark lacks Roman influence.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now criticize each opinion, beginning with the last. Duncan is of the opinion that the mixture of Roman and Hebrew elements points to such circumstances as those of Lk. vii, 5. But it is not certain whether the centurion was a Roman. Presumably he belonged to the Herodian army. If this is true, it is not only the Capernaum synagogue that

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q.St., 1926, pp. 16 ff.



underwent the Roman influence.<sup>1</sup> For example, figures appear in the Roman synagogues at el-Jish, ed-Dikk, Umm el-Kanâtîr, Umm el-'Amed, Khirbet Semmâka, Kerâzeh, Kafr Bir'im, Sheik Abreiq, and others. Therefore if the Capernaum synagogue was built as described in Lk. vii, 5, the other Galilean synagogues would seem of similar origin.

It is to be accepted that the structure of the Ark of the Law is a later construction, because the main entrance is blocked by it (p. 67). It is unthinkable that this entrance was built only to be blocked. If so, certainly the worshippers must have faced south (Jerusalem) after the addition of this structure. But it is not certain to which direction they faced before that. Some rabbinical sources (Mishna, Ta'-snith ii, 1; Tos. Megilla, iv. 21; Tos. Taan. i, 8; Taan. ii, 1; b. Sotah, 39b) refer to a portable chest that contained the scrolls of the Law. Sukenik is of the opinion that this kind of portable chest must have been put in the annex on the northern wall, and been brought into the nave, only whenever it was needed. It was placed to the south; consequently the worshippers faced towards Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> Dalman, too, believes that the worshippers, even of Jesus' time, faced towards to the south.<sup>3</sup> But if we

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>2</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, p. 52; Dalman, SSW, p. 144; p. 144, n. 9.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 145.





should accept Orfali-Duncan's opinion that the Ark stood before the northern colonnade, we have no evidence for the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem was the date of changing the direction of worshippers. To pray towards Jerusalem had been an old custom. I Kings vii, 28, 44, 48, Dan. vi, 11, Ezra iv, 58, and many rabbinical passages evidence this fact. According to a later opinion, all directions were permitted except east, because the minîm faced in that direction.<sup>1</sup> E. Power, who agrees with Orfali only in this particular, thinks that the change of direction was "caused by the application to public worship of the law of orientation in prayer, which was originally enacted for the regulation of private devotions in the home."<sup>2</sup> But he acknowledges that "the date of the extension of this law to worship in the synagogue is unknown."<sup>3</sup> Therefore we can draw no conclusion about the date of the synagogue from the change of the worshippers' direction.

Duncan maintains that the ornamentation of the parts lately added lack Roman influence. But, in fact, the northern frieze of the gallery was decorated with eagles carrying garlands in their beaks, a sea-horse and lions emerging from half-acanthus leaves (p. 67). Therefore it seems to me that Duncan's theory does not stand upon good evidence.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 145.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 145, n. 5.

<sup>3</sup>Biblica, VI, 1925, p. 109.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid.



Orfalis' theory has also serious difficulties. He maintained that it was impossible in the third century to oppose the rabbinic regulation concerning the locations of a synagogue. But the Capernaum synagogue does not contradict this regulation, because it stands at the height of the western edge.

He also believes that it was impossible in the third century to face south-north. But the rabbinic regulation regarding orientation is not an absolute one, but is to be changed according to the local situation (Tos. Meg. iv, 2: b. Sab. 11a). There is no reference to the general acceptance of the regulation of facing a synagogue east-west (Tos. Meg. iv, 22). On the contrary, it was rather the difference of orientation between a synagogue and the Temple that was emphasized, because men who lived in northern Palestine had to face southwards to pray (b. Bab. vi, 25b). Many discoveries of ancient synagogues support this orientation. Those which were north of Jerusalem oriented to the south, such as Kerâze, Umm el-'Amed, Mêrôn, Kafr Bir'im, en-Nablatên, el-Jish, Hammath-by-Tiberia, Sheik Abreiq, Tell es-Sultân,\* Beth Alpha,\* and 'Ain Dûk.\*<sup>1</sup> Those of Transjordan faced toward the west: ed-Dikke, Kafr Kanâtîr,\* Kirbet Kânef,

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\*Indicates the Byzantine synagogues.

<sup>1</sup>With the exception of Irbid. Both the Roman Khirbet Semmâqa synagogue and the Byzantine (\*) 'Isfiyâ synagogue face to the east, because the Carmel was situated so closely to the shore of the Mediterranean Sea that it was assimilated to the district due west of Jerusalem.





Jerash,\* Dura Europos.<sup>1</sup> Those which were to the west of Jerusalem faced toward the east: Delos (the second century B. C.), Aegina (built on the foundations of an older one), Priene,, Miletus, and Stobi.\* The synagogue to the south of Jerusalem, such as es-Samu,\*\* faced toward the north.

Indeed Judaism in the third century might have been strong, but it was not necessarily intolerant of the figures. On the contrary, it was tolerant of them. Because this problem is to be treated in pp. 92 ff., I do not show the evidences here. Therefore we cannot believe that these "irregularities" were impossible in the third century.

Orfali believes that the general dispositions of the architecture have nothing which contradicts ascribing it to the Herodian period. But his architectural discussion is very poor. Indeed, he argues about the Syrian arch and the enrichment of the frieze. He objects to Watzinger, maintaining that these two elements can be found in buildings of an earlier period. But he entirely misses the point of Watzinger's argument. What he argues is that it is in the synagogues and the neighboring buildings that they appear for the first time in fully developed form.

\*Indicates the Byzantine synagogues.

\*\*Indicates the synagogues rebuilt during the Byzantine period.

<sup>1</sup>With the exception of Umm el-Kanâtîr. The el-Hammi Byzantine (\*) synagogue is oriented to the south, because this site was regarded as belonging to western Palestine (cf. p. 40n.1).



Orfali argues against Watzinger's discussion of the similarity between the Capernaum synagogue and the Temples of Kadesh and Kaisun. But, this time, he misses the objects compared, because Watzinger does not cite these Temples in this instance. Therefore Orfali's criticism that Watzinger's theory is petitio principii because the Temple of Kadesh is not dated is not adequate. Moreover, Orfali does not at all discuss the more characteristic points of detail mentioned by Watzinger: "the fully developed Syrian arch in the window at Capernaum resting on two pairs of twisted Corinthian columns, the rich decorations in relief on the door-jamb, the simplification of the crowning of the door lintel from the classical geison and cyma to a moulding with cyma profile, the richly ornamented relieving arch above the principal front door emerging artistically from the wall and serving to decorate the surface, the order and treatment of the ornaments in the decoration of the cornice."<sup>1</sup>

Orfali objects to Watzinger, maintaining that Severus suppressed a Jewish rebellion at the beginning of his reign. He thinks that it is improbable that Severus changed his anti-Jewish policy to a pro-Jewish policy. But there is no evidence that the Galileans joined the rebellion. If they might join, Severus could change his policy to prevent

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<sup>1</sup>Biblica, VI, 1925, pp. 111 f.

Ortloff argues against Watzinger's discussion of the similarity between the Egyptian pyramids and the Temple of Karnak and Karnak. But, this time, he misses the objects compared, because Watzinger does not cite them properly in this instance. Therefore Ortloff's relation between Watzinger's theory is entirely incorrect because the Temple of Karnak is not cited as not adequate. Moreover, Ortloff does not at all discuss the more archaeological evidence of detail mentioned by Watzinger: "the fully developed system even in the window at Giza suggesting on the basis of related Egyptian columns, the river occupation in relation on the door-lamp, the simplification of the structure" would be with some profile, the highly ornamented relieving arch above the principal front door appearing antithetically from the wall and serving to decorate the surface, the entire treatment of the ornaments in the decoration of the door and treatment of the ornaments in the decoration of the door.

Ortloff objects to Watzinger, maintaining that he never expressed a Jewish rebellion at the beginning of his reign. He thinks that it is impossible that Semites changed his anti-Jewish policy to a pro-Jewish policy. But there is no evidence that the Galileans joined the rebellion. It may be that John, however, could change his policy to prevent



any further rebellion. On the contrary, the evidence for the pro-Jewish policy of Severus and Caracalla is too strong to be rejected.<sup>1</sup> The account of the centurion's building of the synagogue is doubtful. For Mt. viii, 5-13 has no account of it. The identification of this with the Gentile contributor is difficult, because in the latter case the Jews accepted the gifts with hesitation. There is no reference in rabbinic literature to the erection of a synagogue by a Gentile.<sup>2</sup> The Jewish tradition of the Middle Ages ascribes the Galilean synagogue to R. Simeon b. Yohai (the second century).<sup>3</sup>

Therefore most recent scholars such as Kitchener, Vincent, Sukenik, Albright, and many others incline to Watzinger's theory. Kitchener dates it in the second or the beginning of the third century;<sup>4</sup> Vincent and Sukenik in the third century;<sup>5</sup> Albright between 150 and 250 A. D.<sup>6</sup> He says that our knowledge of the architecture of the second and third centuries was increased recently by Ba'albek and Gerasa so much that probably no trained modern

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. p. , n. : Biblica, VI, p. 125, pp. 109 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, p. 68.

<sup>4</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1922, p. 151.

<sup>5</sup>Albright, The Haverford Symposium on Archaeology and the Bible, p. 42.

<sup>6</sup>Albright, The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible, p. 58.



scholar maintains that any Galilean synagogues antedate the period of Antonines, and most will date the earliest of them in the third century.<sup>1</sup> Watzinger's dating was correct, but his attempt to attribute it to a Roman Emperor was wrong. This is to be discussed later (p. 95#).

### El-Hammi

The discoveries of the Roman period in el-Hammi are a bath-house, a theater, seats, and other objects.

Bath-house (Fig. 9).-- The remains of a bath-house lie on the northwest side of Hammet Selîm. The plan of the large part of the building was ascertained, and a great many scattered shafts, capitals, and bases were found, which originally belonged to the bath-house.

A large hall with a round end at the south was also found. The round part seems to have been surmounted by a dome. The southern wall had an opening and a vaulted niche to the left of it. Within the niche was a smaller recess, which is supposed to have been a closet. Hot water sprang out of the debris before the niche at a depth of 5.20 m. Hence this room is supposed to have been the caldarium.

West of this room were found a row of rooms with cruciform vaults, alternating with smaller roofless rooms.

Next to these rooms was a large room, communicating with them by a doorway. Its south wall, with a doorway

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<sup>1</sup>Albright, The Haverford Symposium, p. 42.





(4.60 m. wide) is 3.80 m. thick. If the doorway was at the middle of this wall, the width of the room is supposed to have been 18.40 m. But at the present condition of excavation, neither the ends of the south and east walls, nor the west and north walls have been ascertained. This room is supposed to have been the opodyterium.

There are many depressions at various spots around Hammet Selîm. These indicate fallen ceilings of underground rooms. Two of them have been excavated. One is 46 m. north-east of the south end of the caldarium. It is a barrel-vaulted passage (2 m. wide, 3.60 m. high) communicating between two buildings. It was cleared for 5 m. until a low opening without doors was found. This was secondarily blocked by masonry. The floor of the adjoining room was higher than that of the passage. Another depression was excavated at a spot 47 m. north of the caldarium, and another vaulted passage interrupted by a transverse wall with a doorway was found.<sup>1</sup>

Theater (Fig. 10).-- On the eastern slope of the small hill to the east of Tell Bâni, a Roman theater was excavated. The only surviving part, the middle section of the cavea and the stage, were cleared.

The cavea has fifteen rows of seats, which are 60-70 cm. deep. No aisle was found either between or through

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, pp. 24 ff.



the rows. The stage is oriented northeast. The highest row of seats is 6.60 m. higher than the orchestra. The radium is 13 m. Parodoi were found between the orchestra and the stage. This theater is supposed to have seated 1500-2000 people. Many mason's marks were found on the seats. [Fig. 11].

Part of the front and back walls, and the outer northwestern corner of the stage were traced. The back wall is higher by 1.50 m. than the stage itself. The stage is as long as the diameter of the orchestra. Its depth is 5.80 m. At the front edge, it is 1.80 m. above the orchestra; at the back, 2.30 m. Fragments of architecture were found around the theater, probably from the stage, entablature, and top row of seats.

Schumacher found the remains of dressing-rooms and wardrobes next to the stage, and a double supporting wall on the east and west sides of the building. But Sukenik could not find them.<sup>1</sup>

Seats (Fig. 11).--- This row of seats originally consisted of ten seats or charis, set side by side, forming a bench (7.10 m.) running east and west. Each seat is made of a single basalt block. These seats rest on nine basalt slabs. The edges of both seats and the slabs underneath them are moulded in the same fashion. The slabs project

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, pp. 27 ff.





35 cm. from the front edge of the seats, forming a ledge for the feet. Mason's marks were found here, too. (QDAP, VI, 59 ff.)

In the Arab period, this site was used for building a house. At this time the second seat from the west end was used as a corner stone of a wall near by. And the third from the west end was set sideways to fill the gap, forming a threshold.

A sounding in front of the seats showed the following stratification (counting from the surface): (1) the surface layer including both undisturbed Roman masonry and debris of the Arab occupation (1.10 m.--1.60 m. deep); (2) a layer of hand-beaten earth and chips (45 cm. deep) and a thin burnt layer (5 cm. thick); (3) a deposit of mud or brown earth; (4) some fragments of fine colored glass mosaic, lying face downwards as if they had fallen from a wall or ceiling; (5) a continuous deposit of loose earth and rounded pebbles with marks of burning; (6) a coarse masonry foundation (c. 1 m. high), running north and south; (7) very soft yellow rock (5.50 m. from the surface). One Byzantine terra-cotta lamp was found at the bottom of the first layer. A few Arab pot-sherds were found on the surface, while Roman sherds (mostly round-ribbed) were found in all layers. Therefore these seats are attributed to the Roman period.<sup>1</sup>

Coins.-- No coins unearthed in the theater were older than the Roman period. The oldest was from the reign of

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<sup>1</sup>QDAP, VI, 59 ff.



Alexander Sererus, the next of Diocletian Gordian III.

Three coins belonged to the Constantine period. No coins of the Byzantine period were found. Only a few illegible coins of the Arab period were found.

Coins found in the bath house were badly corroded, but can be attributed to the Roman, Byzantine, and Arab periods.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, el-Hammeh, pp. 70 f. The oldest coins found in the Byzantine synagogue are two coppers of the Hellenistic period (Antiochus IV?). A silver coin (Trajan) and two small copper coins (Constantine and Arcadius) are of the Roman period. The majority are from the Byzantine period (mainly from Justine II). Five coins date from the Arab period.





## CHAPTER THREE

### RESULTS OF THE EXCAVATIONS

As we said in the introduction, the purpose of this thesis is to describe the culture, conscience, and history of Roman times in Galilee, particularly in Şaffûriyeh, Tell Hûm, and el-Hammi. Therefore let us recite the results of our study of these localities.

#### Light Thrown on Culture and Conscience

##### Şaffûriyeh

Light on social life.-- The discovery of a decorated bone hairpin and a fragment of a thin gold-sheet chain at the entrance to the vomitaria (p. 57) indicates the fact that the theater was in use. We may suppose that 4,000 or 5,000 people regularly saw the plays and listened to music in the theater.

Cistern no. 8, which contained nine architectural fragments, had early Byzantine sherds, but not Later Byzantine sherds. Therefore the theater must have gone to ruin by the Early Byzantine period, possibly when the city was destroyed under Gallus' reign (351 A. D.). The fact that the wall of the fourth--sixth century A. D. was built over the ruin of the theater (p. 49, n.1) supports this conclusion.



Having been erected by Herod Antipas or Herod the Great (p.103), it was used only during the Roman period. It must have been in ruin by the early Byzantine times.

Light on religious life.-- We saw that by 136 A. D. Judaism was not very strong. But after this period it gradually became stronger; and finally, after the beginning of the third century, Sepphoris became the center of Judaism. It is said that there were as many as eighteen synagogues there. Unfortunately not even a single synagogue has been discovered as yet, except for the mosaic pavement in Anna's Church (p.58). We cannot estimate the prosperity of Judaism on the basis of this single find. Yet it proves the existence of Judaism before 351 A. D.

No Temple of the Roman cult has been discovered. But the coin with the design of the Capitol with statues of Jupiter, Minerva, and Juno indicates that there may have been a temple of Jupiter, Minerva, and Juno in Sepphoris.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen how the lime concrete floor under the mosaic pavement of Room 40 and the cisterns found underneath the southern plinth course and the wall that separates Rooms 23 and 28 evidence the existence of a church earlier than the basilica of the fourth century. The rock-cut apse, baptismal font, and the walls in the Rooms 22, 23, and 29 were attributed to the earlier church (p.50). Imitation terra

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1918, p. 39.





sigillata ware was found from Room 30, and a pot of the first century was produced from Room 28 (p.56). Therefore Manasseh believes that the earlier Christian church must have been in existence since the first or the second century A. D.<sup>1</sup> (p.50 ).

From this evidence we can conclude that at least these three religions--Judaism, Christianity, and paganism were practiced here during the Roman century. The Christian community was of as early as the second or even the first century.

Light on daily life.-- Water has a most intimate relationship to man's daily life. As we have seen, the water works in Sepphoris were of two kinds, cisterns and an aqueduct.

Doubtless the cisterns are earlier than the aqueduct, because the theater building, which is contemporary with or earlier than the aqueduct (p.103), covers cisterns nos. 1 and 3.<sup>2</sup> The numerous cisterns on the summit around the Crusader fort must have been in use as water reservoirs in the first century A. D., for cisterns no. 1, 3, and 8 produced complete vessels of the first century, at least of the Hellenistic period (p. 56). This pottery is so complete that we suppose it was dropped into the water by accident

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 25, n. 33; 27, n. 39.

significance were not found from 1900, and it is not  
 that century was produced from 1900 (1900). The evidence  
 however believes that the earliest Christian church must  
 have been in existence from the first of the century and

the evidence is not sufficient to prove that it was

From this evidence we can conclude that at least  
 there were religious--Christian, Christianity, and religion  
 the community was not as early as the period in which the

Life on the Nile.--The Nile was a great river in  
 relation to man's life. As we have seen, the water  
 works in the world were of two kinds, Christian and non-

Without the Christian and earlier than the other  
 fact, because the Christian religion, which is contemporary  
 with or earlier than the present (1900), covers Christian  
 non. 1 and 2. The numerous churches in the world today  
 are Christian and have been in existence since the first century  
 in the first century A.D. The Christian religion, it is not of  
 the Christian religion of the first century, it is not of  
 the Christian religion of the first century. This century is no longer  
 that we suppose it was. It is not the same as the

and remained there.<sup>1</sup>

The cisterns must have gone out of use with the installation of the aqueduct. As we shall see later, the aqueduct must have been built by Herod Antipas when he restored the city of Sepphoris on a large scale. The rain water reserved in the cisterns was no longer sufficient, and another means of water supply was needed to take the place of the cisterns. Hence, the aqueduct was built. We may imagine the inhabitants enjoying this new water supply.

With the building of the aqueduct it is improbable that all the cisterns fell into disuse at once. Some must have remained in use. In fact, the cistern no. 8 contained not only pottery sherds of late Roman and Byzantine periods, but also nine architectural fragments of the theater. This fact proves that the cistern was still in use after the destruction of the theater in the Early Byzantine period. In fact, local tradition maintains that some of the cisterns and the aqueduct were connected (p.55).

The aqueduct must have been out of use by the time of the Crusades, because the Crusade's Amaury, Baldwin IV, and Guy de Lusignan had to make the Sepphoris springs their headquarters.<sup>2</sup>

The stone base of an oil-press (p. 55) illustrates how olives were pressed. Figure 5 is an oil press reconstructed by Manasseh, after the present-day common wooden

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 22 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 14 ff.





oil-press. (1) shows baskets like those in which the pressed olives were put. (2) is a round wooden plank to press the baskets. The screw in the wooden plank turns freely. It is fastened to (3). The plank is lowered by turning (3) with the handles, (4). (5) turns around the screw freely from (3). When it becomes impossible to lower the screw by turning with one's hands, (5) is attached to (3) with the wedge, (7), and is turned with a wooden pole (c. 4 m.) inserted into (6). (3) has many grooves for (7), so that it may be inserted into another groove when the pole is returned after reaching its limit. In a similar and more common type, (3) and (5) are made of one piece. In this case (3) has four handles, and the pole is taken out and inserted into the next socket whenever it reaches the limit. The oil flows into the reservoir through the hole (8).<sup>1</sup>

So far we have discussed mainly the revelations of archaeology on the culture and conscience of the inhabitants of Sepphoris. They enjoyed social life in the theater; they had a convenient water supply; and they had at least three religions. Besides these, we can also reconstruct a partial picture of their intellectual life from the remains of the synagogue; their economic life from the coins; their culture from the architectural fragments; their religious life from the rock-cut tombs; and their daily life from many small

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 12 ff.



objects.

### Tell Hûm

Light on religious life.-- Its brilliant synagogue, unsurpassed by any other Galilean or Palestinean synagogue, shows us why Capernaum was the focus of Judaism.

The city did not grow out of the influence of superstition but from Roman and Syrian culture. The Jews who built the synagogue were tolerant of local superstitions and of the Roman and Syrian cultures, it being the only Capernaum synagogue that used the prophylastic motives, such as pentagrams, hexagrams, heptagrams, Heracleian knots, and such designs.<sup>1</sup> These seem to indicate the existence in Capernaum of magical ideas in religion. According to Sukenik,<sup>2</sup> the design of the carriage in the form of a little temple standing on the wheels on the northern frieze stone of the gallery (p. 67) has relation to this superstition. Watzinger<sup>3</sup> interpreted this as the Roman carruca. Because the leader of the Jews, R. Juda han-Nasi, had been given the privilege of carruca, this design was carved to commemorate it permanently in the synagogue. But Sukenik doubts this opinion on the ground that, though this privilege must have been appreciated by the contemporary Jews, it was not worth being commemorated permanently in the synagogue, and also

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, p. 17, n. 2; pp. 65 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 17, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Antike Synagogen, 193 ff.





that the explanation of the carruca as a portable shrine is not based upon facts.<sup>1</sup>

The figure motives have relationship to the Roman-Syrian culture. For example, the motive of an eagle with outspread wings appears on the front of the lintel of the main and the eastern front doorways (p.59f.). The same motive is also to be seen on the synagogues at el-Jish, ed-Dikke, and Umm el-Kanâtîr. And it has a parallel in a Roman temple at Kadesh, Bakchos temple at Ba'albek and others.<sup>2</sup> The eagle holding a circle with its talons, that appears on the lintel of the eastern doorway (p.60) is carved on Syrian tomb monuments. This circle stood for a laurel crown, indicating the victory over this world. The eagles picking the band of a wreath with their beaks appears on the key stone of the great front arch (p.61) and on the cornice stone of the northern wall of the gallery (p.67). This motive is carved on Syrian tombs again. The lion whose forepart only emerges out of an acanthus ring appears on the frieze of the façade, on the structure of the Ark of the Law and on the frieze of the northern wall of the gallery (p.62,67). This motive has parallels in the frieze of the stage of the theater at Myra, in the frieze of the Nabatian temple at

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<sup>1</sup> Ancient Synagogues, footnote, p. 18; Dalman is of the opinion that it represents the portable chest of the Law, and is under the influence of the festival chariot of Aphrodite. SSW, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> These illustrations are taken from Kohl-Watzinger, Antike Synagogen, pp. 195 ff.



Kasr Rabba, and in the doorposts of the Mausoleum Spalato and in other places. The motive of a single centaur has relationship to the Dionysian company and had been used on monuments. And it was used on the lintel of the eastern front doorway (p. 60). The same motive appears on the synagogue at Kerâze. The Erotes with garland on the lintel of the main doorways (p. 59) is the most popular motive of Roman sarcophagi. The appearance of figures is a universal phenomenon in all Roman synagogues in Galilee. From the existence of these figures we judge the great influence of the Roman-Syrian culture upon Jewish life and the tolerance of the Jewish community towards this culture.

There are of course different opinions about the explanation of the use of figures in Galilean synagogues. Some ascribe it to the work of a liberal section of Galilean Jews.<sup>1</sup> But the usage is so universal in Galilee that we cannot attribute it to a section only. Watzinger ascribes it to the gifts of Roman Caesar. Because of the great number of gifts, the Jewish leaders in Galilee had to pursue the Roman plan, he says. But this opinion has difficulties. After Watzinger, numerous figures were found in synagogues not only in Galilee but also outside Galilee. More than this, the absolute silence of both literary and inscriptional evidence is a serious difficulty. When so many inscriptions and literary references for rather slight

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp. 61 f.





gifts are preserved,<sup>1</sup> why was so great a contribution of political importance not preserved? Moreover, indeed there always have been schools which interpreted Ex. 20:4 and Deut. 5:8 rigorously; but on the other hand there have always been more liberal schools, which interpreted the commandment merely as the prohibition of worshipping images or making images for purposes of worship. Those who canonized those accounts as follows, I K. 6-7, II Chr. 3-4, II Chr. 9, Ezk. 41:18-20, must not have been opposed to figures. Many passages in Talmudic literature show the tolerant attitude of great rabbis toward figures (Tosephta, 'Aboda Zara 5(6):2; b. 'Aboda Zara 42c; j. 'Aboda Zara 42b-32a.<sup>2</sup> Above all the excavation at Sheikh Abreiq disproves Watzinger's theory, because it shows how freely figures were used as ornamentations of Jewish tombs and synagogues during the second and fourth century. We cannot believe that those tombs were made by the gift of Roman Caesar.

A more natural explanation of the phenomenon of figures in synagogue buildings is that the Jews were tolerant

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<sup>1</sup>For example, the Palestinian Talmud preserves an account of donation of a candelabrum to a synagogue by a non-Jew (J. Megilla, 74a). Inscriptions of the mosaic pavement of the el-Hammi synagogue mention five denarii, one denarius, one half-denarius, one tresissis, three scruples, and cloths donated to the synagogue. Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, p. 63; el-Hammeh, pp. 41, 48, 54, 56.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 62 ff.



of Roman-Syrian culture. But on the other hand, we have evidence that almost all of the figures have been deliberately obliterated. It is impossible to obliterate only part of the figure of a stone, unless done deliberately. Therefore we can conclude that there were intolerant as well as tolerant periods in Jewish history.<sup>1</sup>

The history of Jewish attitudes towards figures seems to be something like this: (1) The end of the second and the third century seems to have been a tolerant period. And it was during this period that the Galilean synagogues were built. (2) Then, according to Sukenik,<sup>2</sup> followed the period of opposition to the sculpture of figures only. They were still tolerant of paintings and mosaics. He maintains that this was the period of obliteration of the figures of Roman synagogues, and of the erection of the Byzantine synagogues. Indeed we have beautiful fresco work on the walls of the synagogue at Dura-Europos (245 A. D.). But in Palestine no remains of figures on pavements or frescoes of the third century have been discovered. Therefore it seems to me very difficult to say that the Jews were intolerant only to sculptures. The discoveries of Sheikh Abreiq will contribute for this point. (3) Then followed the period of destruction of not only three but also two-dimensional figures. This is supposed to be the period

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp. 64 f.

<sup>2</sup>This discussion is under obligation to Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp. 61 ff.





when the synagogue of 'Ain Duq was destroyed. From the fact that when Eusebius and Jerome were living in Palestine, Chorazin (Khirbet Kerâze)--the synagogue of which, according to Sukenik, escaped obliteration of the figures--was not already inhabited, we can suppose the fourth century to be the terminus a quo of the second period. The synagogue at Beth Alpha, which was destroyed by an earthquake in the sixth century, escaped willful destruction of its mosaic pavement. Therefore the terminus a quo of the third period must be later than the destruction of the Beth Alpha synagogue. It must have been that while the Jews were under favor they were tolerant of the figures, but intolerant while they were under persecution.<sup>1</sup>

As Kraeling suggests there might have been a distinction between those figures that might be the occasion of idolatry and consequently forbidden, and those which were not and consequently permitted.<sup>2</sup> But unfortunately this question has not yet been studied.

We may ask whether the figures were introduced as symbols in the pagan meaning, or as symbols in the meaning interpreted by the Jews, or just as purely decorative motives. On this question, Albright prefers "to minimize

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<sup>1</sup>Sukenik regards the occurrence of the intolerant third period as due to the influence of Monophysite Christians of the Near East at about this time, and that this tendency was intensified by the Arab conquest. Ancient Synagogues, p. 65.

<sup>2</sup>JAOS, LV, pp. 107 ff.



their symbolical meaning, and to doubt whether any of the original pagan motives were regularly interpreted in terms of Jewish symbolism."<sup>1</sup>

All synagogues in Palestine are of the basilica style. This use of basilica forms is also Roman influence. But the synagogues in Delos, Aegina, and Miletus, which are older than those of Palestine, did not have columns, in their original form at least.<sup>2</sup> The synagogue of Dura Europos has no columns either.<sup>3</sup> Therefore we may say that the original form of the synagogue building was without columns. But under the influence of Hellenistic culture, the basilica form, which was universal in the Hellenistic world for public buildings, came to be introduced into synagogue buildings also used for public purposes. But we do not know when this type of building came into use. It was, however, universally used during the third century, when the synagogue of Capernaum and other places were built.<sup>4</sup>

We have already seen that the structure of the Ark of the Law is a later addition, and that possibly a portable chest of the Law was used before (p. 76). Although it is not certain whether the worshippers faced north or south before the construction of the Ark of the

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<sup>1</sup>The Haverford Symposium on Archaeology and the Bible, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup>Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp. 38, 40, 44.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 46.





Law, undoubtedly they faced to the south after its construction.<sup>1</sup>

The discovery of fragments of two lion statues indicates the fact that they flanked the Ark of the Law. This fact is to be confirmed by the fact that one of two fragmental statues of lions was found in the central nave near the southern end. The figures of lions flanking the Ark of the Law appears also on several of the guilt cups, and the mosaic pavement of the Beth Alpha synagogue.<sup>2</sup>

The existence of the gallery and the staircase leading to it on the outside wall of the annex indicate that the gallery was used for women. The discovery of stone vessels in the courtyard (p. 71) indicates the custom of washing hands before worship.<sup>3</sup>

Light on economic life.-- As a border city, Capernaum was not unimportant from a political point of view. It was not a political center, however, but rather a fishing center. The fact that no wall was found will prove this. But it must have been a rich city. Especially after the establishment of Julias as a capital of Philip, it must

<sup>1</sup>In this connection the synagogue of Sheik Abreiq is of special interest, because this synagogue has the structure of the Ark of the Law at the same spot as that of Tell Hûm. But the former has not the central entrance. This may be the transitional plan between the Roman and the Byzantine synagogues (p. 44).

<sup>2</sup>Sukenik, Beth Alpha, pp. 32 ff.

<sup>3</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 146.



have become of greater importance. The city had a quarry. Unhewn stones found in the Tell Hûm ruins are evidence of it (p.28). These stones must have been sent to Tiberias.<sup>1</sup> That the city was rich is indicated by the architecture of the synagogue. While all the Galilean synagogues were made of local stone, that of Tell Hûm is not made of local basalt, but of limestone, which was brought in from other districts. And the workmanship is superior to that of any other synagogue in the whole of Palestine. We do not know whether the architects were local people or outsiders; it seems that the latter supposition is not impossible.

We can also imagine this synagogue as having been used for social and intellectual purposes, especially as the third century was the period when Judaism developed in Galilee.

#### El-Hammi

Light on social life.-- The bath house and the theater show us that the social life there was predominantly Hellenistic. An inscription in the Byzantine synagogue indicates how people came there from various places, such as Sûsîtha, Sepphoris, Kafr 'Aqabyah, Capernaum, and Arbela (p.41). It must have been the same during the Roman period. All this is checked by literary evidence (p.224).

No coins belonging to the pre-Roman period or post

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 139.





Roman period (p.85f) were found in the theater. This indicates that the theater was built in the Roman period and destroyed during the same period. By contrast, the coins found in the bath-house are of the Roman, Byzantine, and Arab periods (p.86), indicating that it was continually in use.

A study of the masons' marks on stones of the theater and the Roman seats (p.84f) might reveal some connection between the two, but it has not yet been made.

### Light Thrown on History

#### Saffûriyeh

The discoveries in Saffûriyeh help us check the facts we have already gleaned from literary sources.

According to literary evidence, Sepphoris had already been a strongly fortified city by the time of Alexander Jannaus. And Herod the Great built there his royal arsenals and a palace. Herod Antipas brilliantly rebuilt the city after the destruction of Varus. Finally it was destroyed under the reign of Gallus (351 A. D.) (p.8ff.).

These historical statements have been confirmed by the discoveries. The typical Hasmonean and Herodian drafted stones that were used over again in the masonry of the older and larger building unearthed at the eastern side of the Crusader fort (p.48) must be remains of a still older building which was built either by early Hasmoneans, or by Herod the Great. S. Yeivin maintains the former opinion on the ground that Herod "would not have

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been likely to fortify a city which sided with his Hasmonean opponent (Antigonus)."<sup>1</sup> But judging from the facts that the Sepphorites accepted Herod without resistance, and that he built royal arsenals and a palace (p.84), Waterman is of the opinion that these stones belong to the Herodian period.

Greatest light was thrown on the period of Antipas because the old fort (or palace), theater, and aqueduct seem to be of his period.<sup>2</sup> The old fort (or palace) must have been built in the period between the Hasmoneans or Herod and the Crusaders, after the Hasmonean or Herodian fort and before the Crusaders' fort. On the other hand, the only literary evidence we know during this period points to rebuilding by Antipas. Actually the terra cotta lamp of the Augustan period from Room 2 (p.48) confirms this assumption. The fact that a great many of the complete vessels and sherds from the summit of the tell belong to the Hellenistic and Byzantine periods (p.56) supports this again. Some coins found on the summit also belong to the first century A. D. Therefore we can suppose that this building was erected by Antipas. The purpose of the building is not certain. But, judging from the beautifully colored stucco inside the rooms (p.48), it may have been

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>But we must take note of Albright's opinion. He says it is "a date that seems to the writer opposed to the evidence of masonry, architectural ornament, and inherent probability." Haverford Symposium, p. 43.





a palace.<sup>1</sup>

The theater must have been built by either Herod the Great or Antipas. Both periods before Herod the Great and after Antipas are improbable, because Hasmonean Jewish kings cannot be thought to have built a theater, and because there is no other period when a theater was likely to have been built after Antipas. Whether Herod or Antipas built it is difficult to decide. As Waterman suggests,<sup>2</sup> the former opinion is not impossible, for Herod the Great was fond of building theaters (Ant. Jud. xv. 8, 1), and he built a royal arsenal and a palace there. Actually Antipas' palace (or fort) contains stone from a fort possibly built by him. But as to Antipas, there is definite literary evidence of his rebuilding of the city in large scale. In fact the palace (or fort) and the aqueduct (to be mentioned later) belong to his times. He might have followed his father's interest in building a theater. We cannot decide. If the former opinion is to be accepted, Antipas must have enlarged and glorified the theater his father built. The substitution of a stone floor on the stage for the wooden one may be attributed to Antipas.<sup>3</sup>

The aqueduct also seems to belong to the period of Antipas, because, as we have mentioned, we know no other period when the city was built on a large scale. He must

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<sup>1</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, pp. 28 f.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 29, n. 51.



have built this aqueduct before he built Tiberias and transferred his capital there (26-39 A. D. or 17-18 A. D.).<sup>1</sup> Thus these discoveries verify the history of Antipas' rebuilding of Sepphoris.

Sepphoris is called by later writers (except Jewish) Diocaesarea as well as Sepphoris.<sup>2</sup> To support this, coins under the reign of Antonius Pius (138-161 A. D.) and the following three reigns preserve the legend reading, "Διοκα(σάρεια) ἱερὰ Ἰσ(υλος) καὶ αὐτό(νομος) "(p.57 ).

Thus these coins throw light on the history of Sepphoris. But on the other hand they led to disagreement among scholars. For they maintain it is hardly acceptable that Sepphoris came to be called Diocaesarea only after Antonius Pius. Those scholars<sup>3</sup> who insist that it was after Antonius Pius, maintain that Sepphoris joined a local revolt or disturbance under the reign of Antonius Pius, and, after the pacification of it, was more hellenized and was given the new name. Yeivin rejects this opinion on the ground that at the turn from the second to the third century the city is again a large and important Jewish center.<sup>4</sup> With Dalman,<sup>5</sup> Yeivin is of the opinion that Sepphoris had been called Diocaesarea since the time of Antipas. And he

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Schürer, HJP, II, i, 140, nn. 372, 373.

<sup>3</sup>Schürer accepts, Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 75; p. 75, n. 5.





explains the phenomenon of the coins this way: after the rebellion of Bar-Kokeba under Hadrian the Gentile influence in the city council outgrew the Jewish. Hence the name of Diocaesarea began to be struck on the coins under Antius Pius. But at the end of the second century the Jewish power again became greater. Hence the name disappeared from the coins. But it continued to be used officially. Hence Eusebius used this name exclusively.<sup>1</sup>

Whichever theory may be accepted, the coins throw the light on the fact that at least after the reign of Antonius Pius, Sepphoris was called by another name, Diocaesarea.

We have seen how the Sepphorites continued loyal to Rome during the Jewish rebellion (p. 114). Yeivin suggests that this loyalty was due to the external water supply, i.e., the aqueduct. He says that the preceding winter was droughty.<sup>2</sup> So the city could not have stood a long siege if the outside water supply were cut by the Romans.<sup>3</sup>

So far as we know, the title of Capitolium is attributed only to a town that has a temple of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, or a shrine of Jupiter Capitolinus. If our conjecture that there was a temple of Jupiter, Juno, and

<sup>1</sup>Waterman, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 24, n. 29.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 23 f.



Minerva in Sepphoris at the time of Antonius Pius is correct (p.88), this city must have been one of the Capitolia at that time.<sup>1</sup>

### Tell Hûm

In p.22 we reached the conclusion from non-archaeological evidence that Christian and Jewish pilgrims' accounts support the Tell Hûm theory, but in the Biblical and Josephus' references there remain some objections against this theory. But it was archaeological excavation that threw great light on this topographic problem.

Because the Christian pilgrims' accounts locate Capernaum two miles (or one hour's journey) to the east of the traditional place to which Christ's Benediction, Feeding of Five Thousand, and Appearance after the Resurrection, were attributed, the keystone for the settlement of the topographic problem is the identification of this traditional site. One tradition places it at present Hajar en-Nusâra, on the high plateau north or northwest of Tiberias.<sup>2</sup> Another tradition places it at the present et-Tâbigha. But the excavation unearthed the basilica with a mosaic pavement, representing a basket filled with loaves flanked on both sides with a fish (the second half of the fourth

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1918, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Sanday and Waterhouse, SSG, p. 46.





century A. D.) at eṭ-Tâbigha (p.33 ). And because the stone found at the center of the basilica under the main altar of the choir, on which, according to tradition, Jesus placed the five loaves and two fishes, is older than the basilica, the tradition at eṭ-Tâbigha must be older than the second half of the fourth century.

The actual excavation at Tell Hûm confirms its identification with Capernaum. The Bible refers to a synagogue built, according to Lk. vii, 5, by the centurion. Petrus Diaconus reports that the house of Peter, just a few paces from the door of the synagogue, turned into a church, and the synagogue he saw had a stair case and was made of square stones (p.27f.). Although the synagogue excavated by Kohl and Watzinger and Orfali cannot be identified with the Biblical synagogue (p.81f.), it must have been this synagogue that Petrus Diaconus saw. Actually the synagogue at Tell Hûm has staircases. The remains of what is to be identified with Peter's house turned into a church was discovered. Namely Dalman is of the opinion that either the basilica, found between the synagogue and the octagon, or the building to which the two rough columns discovered nearby the synagogue belong, must have been that church (p.27f.).<sup>1</sup> Thus the discoveries exactly fit the pilgrims' reference to Capernaum.

On the other hand the excavation at Khirbet Minyeh

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<sup>1</sup>Dalman, SSW, p. 152.



completely disproved the Khirbet Minyeh theory, because the palace does not come from the Roman period but from the first part of the eighth century (p. 37). Thus Macalister and Masterman's conclusion that "the site may without any hesitation be pronounced entirely Arab," is confirmed.<sup>1</sup>

By these triple evidences from archaeology, it has been decided that modern Tell Hûm was ancient Capernaum.

If Tell Hûm is Capernaum, how must we solve the difficulties caused by the Biblical and Josephus' references? Indeed, the Gospels point to a place near Gennesaret as Capernaum. But, in the first place, we still might doubt the historicity of the Biblical setting, especially that of John. If we should accept it, the Gospel never did say the Plain of Gennesaret. It is not impossible that the district called Gennesaret extended as far as the present site of et-Tâbigħa.<sup>2</sup> If so, the Biblical accounts do not remain a difficulty.

Josephus' references caused several difficulties: the problem of the coracin fish, of the name of Capernaum attributed to Sheikh 'Ain edh-Dhaher, and of the account that the spring watered Gennesaret (p. 164).

The coracin is usually identified with the catfish,

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<sup>1</sup>Masterman, Studies, p. 61; PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 117; 1909, p. 170; 1914, p. 117, 118; 1935, pp. 97 f. Cf. Religion in Life, Winter, 1939, pp. 103 f.

<sup>2</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 221; Masterman, Studies, p. 68.





but it is not certain that the two can be so identified.<sup>1</sup> It is not sound to conclude that absence of the catfish in our modern time precludes the possibility of its existence in ancient times. In Josephus' time, when the wall (c. 8 m. high) had not yet been built around the spring,<sup>2</sup> the catfish must have gone up to the spring. As it will be mentioned later, according to the Gospels, Capernaum (Tell Hûm) seems to have been a large city. If so, the fishing field of et-Tabigha possibly belonged to Capernaum. Hence the springs were called (the springs of) Capernaum. Buckhard supports this opinion, saying "Josephus calls this fountain Caphernaum because the whole land from the fountain to the Jordan--a distance of two hours--belonged to Capernaum" (p.184).<sup>3</sup> As in the Gospels, Josephus does not mention the Plain of Gennesaret. Therefore he must have meant by "Gennesaret" the district of et-Tâbigha. If not, aqueducts seem to have watered the Plain of Gennesaret.<sup>4</sup> The distance between the plain and Tell Hûm is so small that in both the Gospels and Josephus confusion was easily possible.

Because we have solved the topographic problem, we

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<sup>1</sup>T. G. Washington identifies it with Telapia. PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 317.

<sup>2</sup>It was built in the Arab period. Masterman, Studies, p. 66. PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 224.

<sup>3</sup>Masterman, Studies, p. 82; PEF. Q. St., p. 223; Dalman, SSW, p. 136.

<sup>4</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1907, p. 119; 1926, p. 21



can now go into the description of the history of Tell Hûm. Tell Hûm is ancient Capernaum. According to the Synoptic Gospels, Capernaum was the center of Jesus' mission. Reconstructing from the passages of the Gospels, scholars maintain that Capernaum must have been a big city (πόλις, Mt. ix, 1), with Roman garrison (Mt. viii, 5), a custom-station (Mk. ii, 14; Mt. ix, 9; Lk. v, 27), and a synagogue built by the centurion (Lk. vii, 5). Jesus' word, "exalted unto heaven" (Mt. xi, 23; Lk. x, 15) is taken to indicate the greatness of this city. Its greatness extended so far that the springs at et-Tâbigha were called the springs of Capernaum (Bel. Jud. iii, 10, 8). When Josephus fell from his horse and fractured some bones in his wrist, he was carried to Capernaum and could get a physician (Vita, 72). It is probable that, after Herod Philip had built his capital at Julias (Bethsaida, et-Tell, or more probably el-'Araj;<sup>1</sup> Ant. xx, 8, 4; Bel. Jud. ii, 13, 2), in 4--2 B. C., Capernaum must have developed from a fishing village to a commercial town. The comes Joseph was allowed to build a church there at the beginning of the fourth century. Capernaum is reported to have still been a Jewish town (Epiphanius, Adv. Haeres xxx). Jewish and Christian pilgrims visited there very often. We have no need to repeat their accounts here (see p.174). But after 1598, when Noë visited there, it became gradually more difficult to reach

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<sup>1</sup>PEF. Q. St., 1935, pp. 144 f.





that site on account of the Moslems. Consequently the pilgrims went to the site now called Khirbet Minyeh, and looked in the direction of Capernaum. But gradually the site of Khirbet Minyeh came to be regarded as Capernaum. This phenomenon took place not only at Capernaum but also at other places. For example, Bethsaida came to be located at the site of et-Tâbigha; the traditional site of Christ's Beatitudes, Feeding of Five Thousand, and Appearance after the Resurrection at Hajar en-Nusâra, near Tiberias.<sup>1</sup> So far as we know Quaresmius (1920) is the first man who identified Khirbet Minyeh with Capernaum.<sup>2</sup>

#### El-Hammi

According to Glueck's soundings, no traces of a Roman settlement on Tell Bâni were found (p.39 ). Only a very few coins of the Hellenistic and Roman periods were unearthed in the Byzantine synagogue, while a great deal of the Byzantine coins were discovered (p.86n). On the other hand, a Roman theater, bath house, seats, and sherds were found in the plain of el-Hammi. The Roman coins were found in the theater. The Roman, Byzantine, and Arab coins were unearthed from the bath house (p.86 ). Therefore the settlement at el-Hammi in the Roman period must have been confined to this plain.

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<sup>1</sup>JPOS, X, 1930, pp. 32 ff.

<sup>2</sup>Masterman, Studies, p. 87; PEP. Q. St., 1907, p. 227.



The stratification in front of the Roman seats (p. 95) indicates the successive occupations during three or four periods, but its relation to historical events has not yet been studied.

So far we have seen the light which archaeological excavations have thrown upon the history and "culture and conscience" of the three sites. Sepphoris was revealed as a political, social, and religious center. Capernaum was revealed as a religious center and also a place of economic importance. Hammath-by-Gadara was revealed as a social center. Although the most Hellenized sites were Hammath-by-Gadara and Sepphoris, even Capernaum was strongly influenced by Hellenistic cultures.





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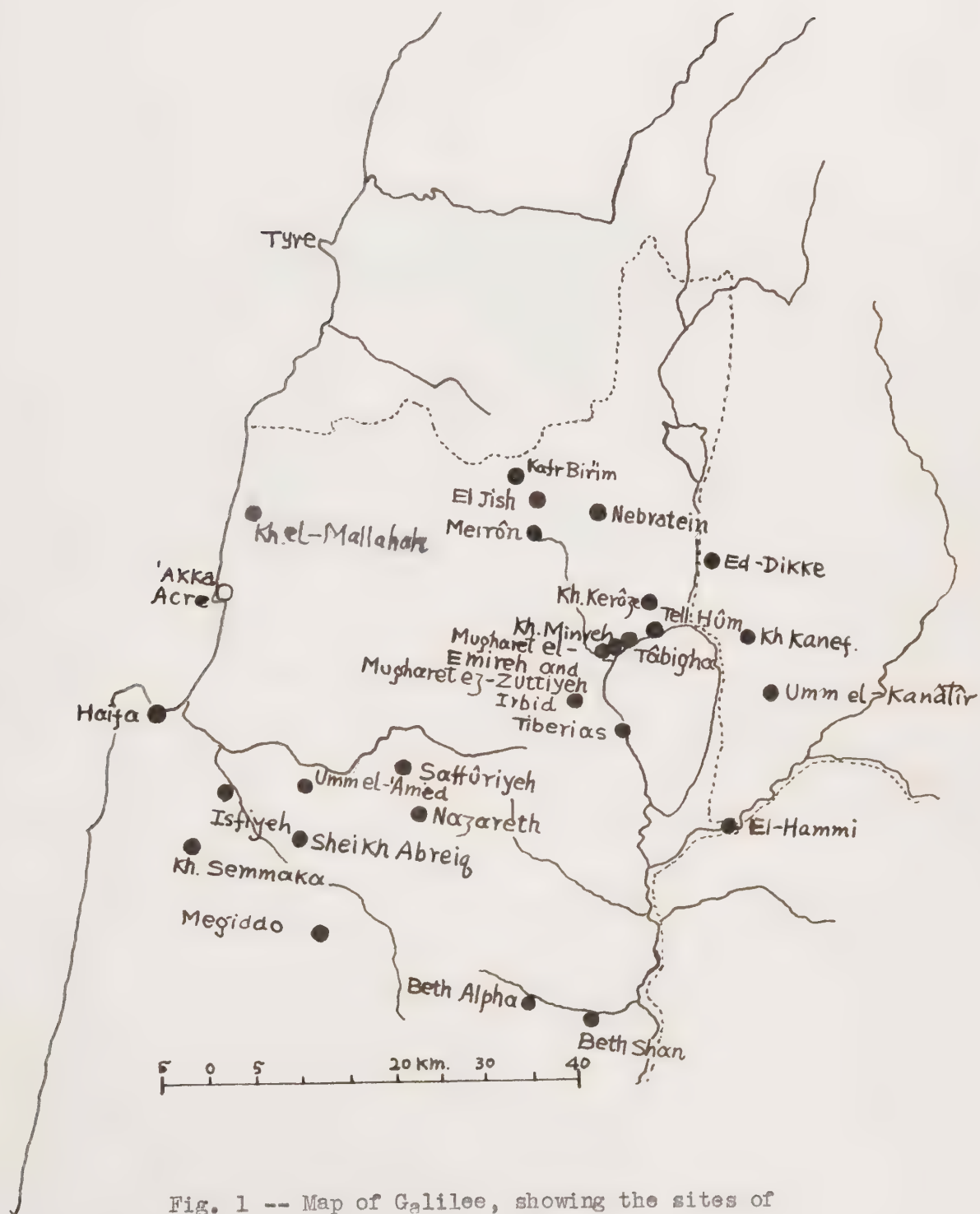


Fig. 1 -- Map of Galilee, showing the sites of excavations in Galilee



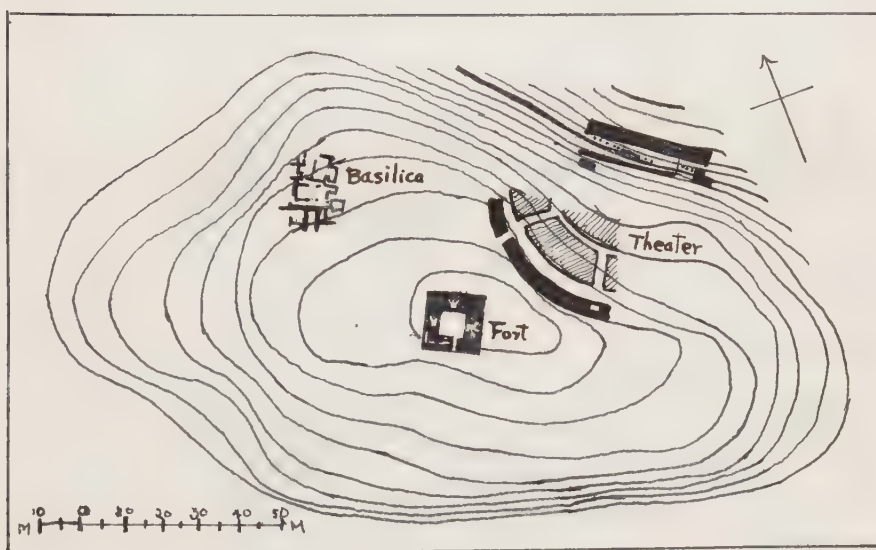


Fig. 2 -- Contour map of Şaffûriyeh

(Taken from Waterman, Sepphoris, p.1)





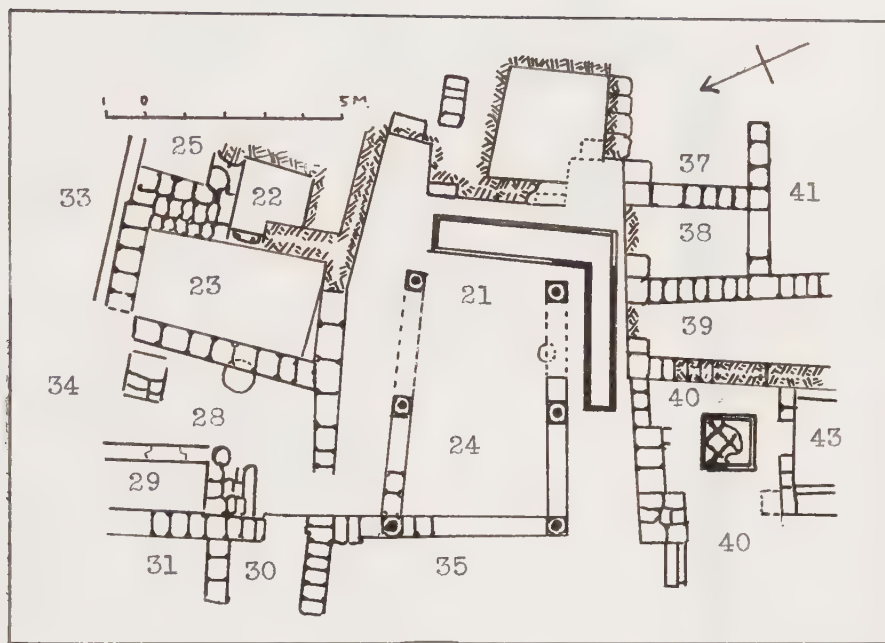


Fig. 3 -- Plan of the Early Christian Church at Saffūriyeh

(Taken from Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 5)



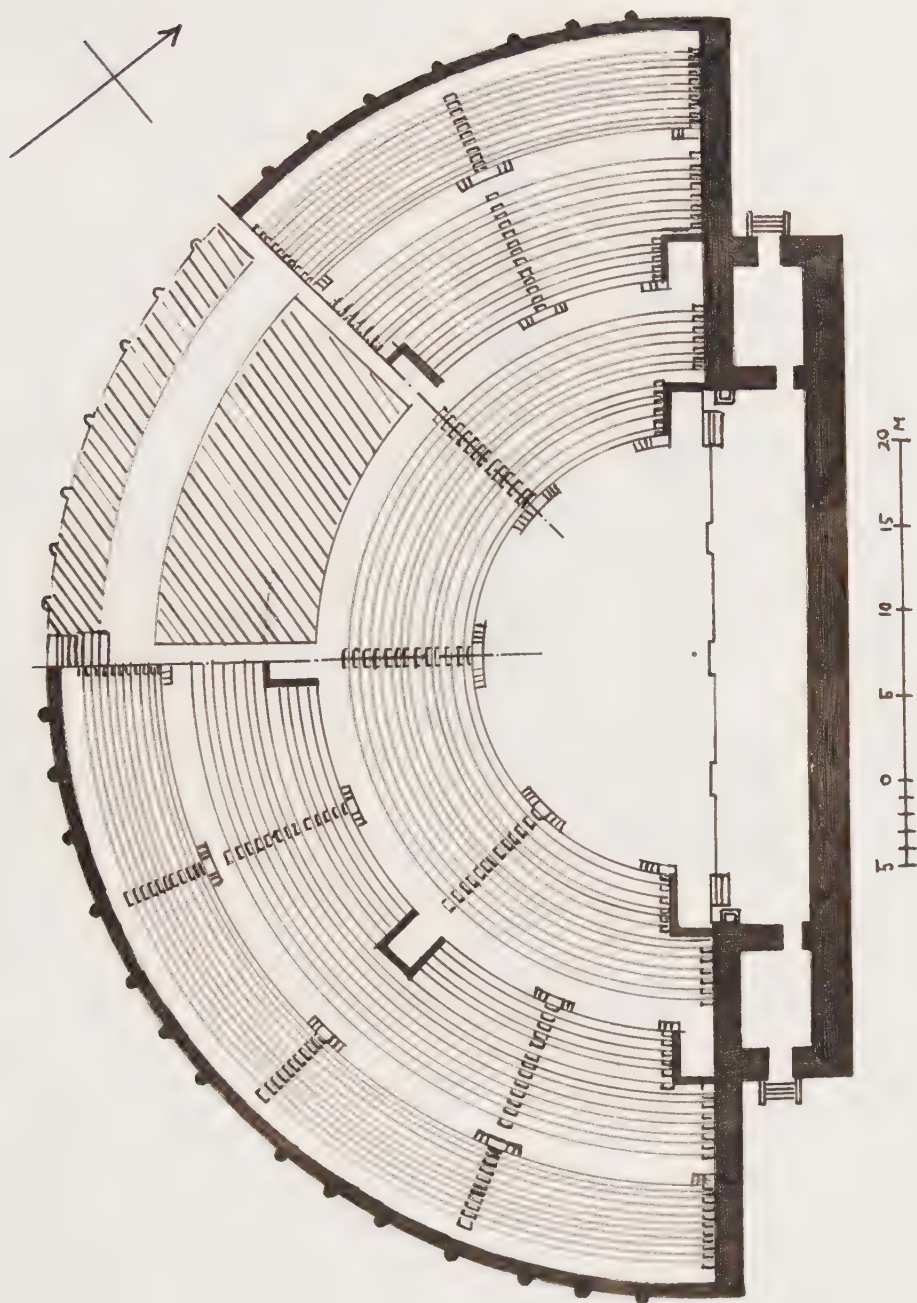


Fig. 4 -- Plan of the theater at Şaffûriyeh  
 (Taken from Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 7)





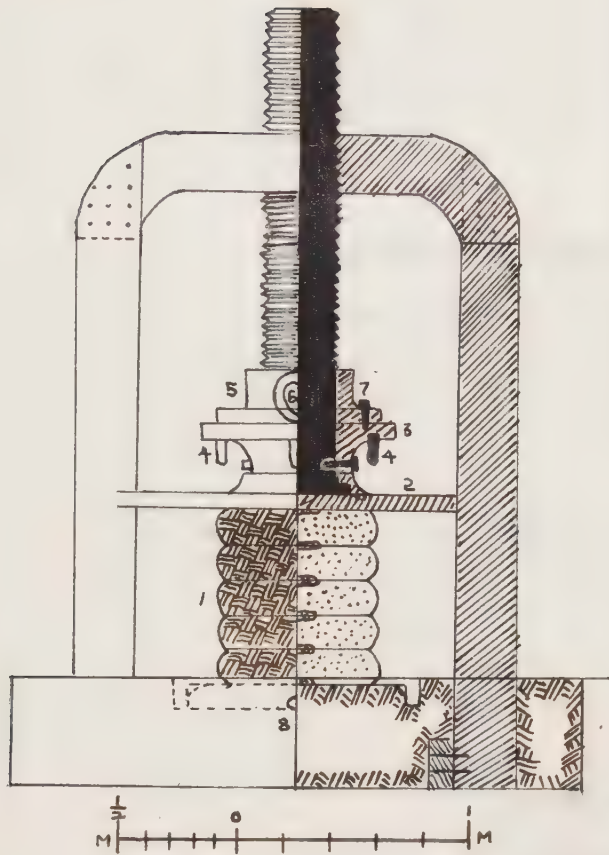


Fig. 5 -- Reconstructed plan of the oil  
press found at Saffûriyeh

(Taken from Waterman, Sepphoris, p. 13)



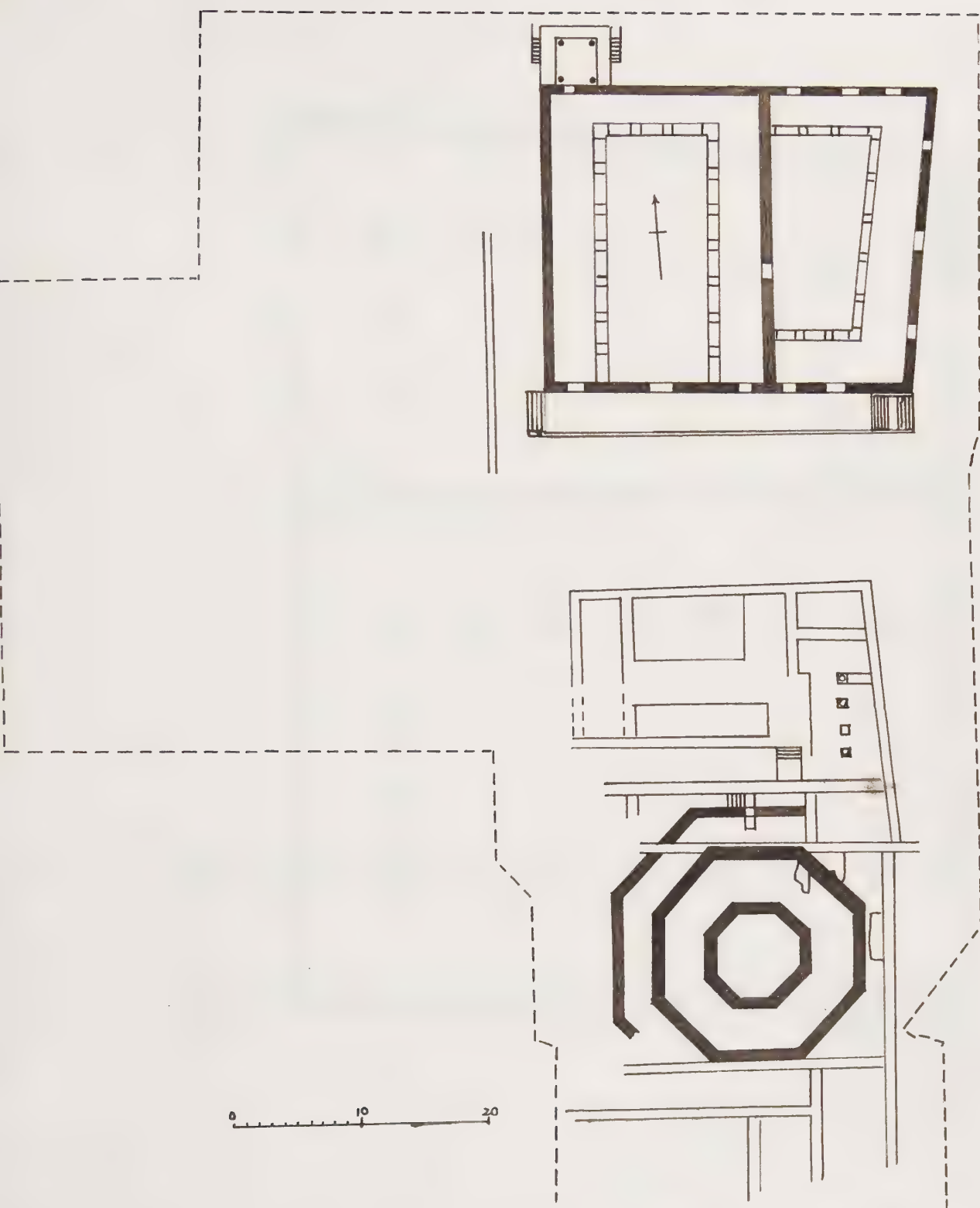


Fig. 6 -- Plan of assembly of excavations at Tell Hūm

(Taken from Orfali, Capharnaum, Pl. 1)





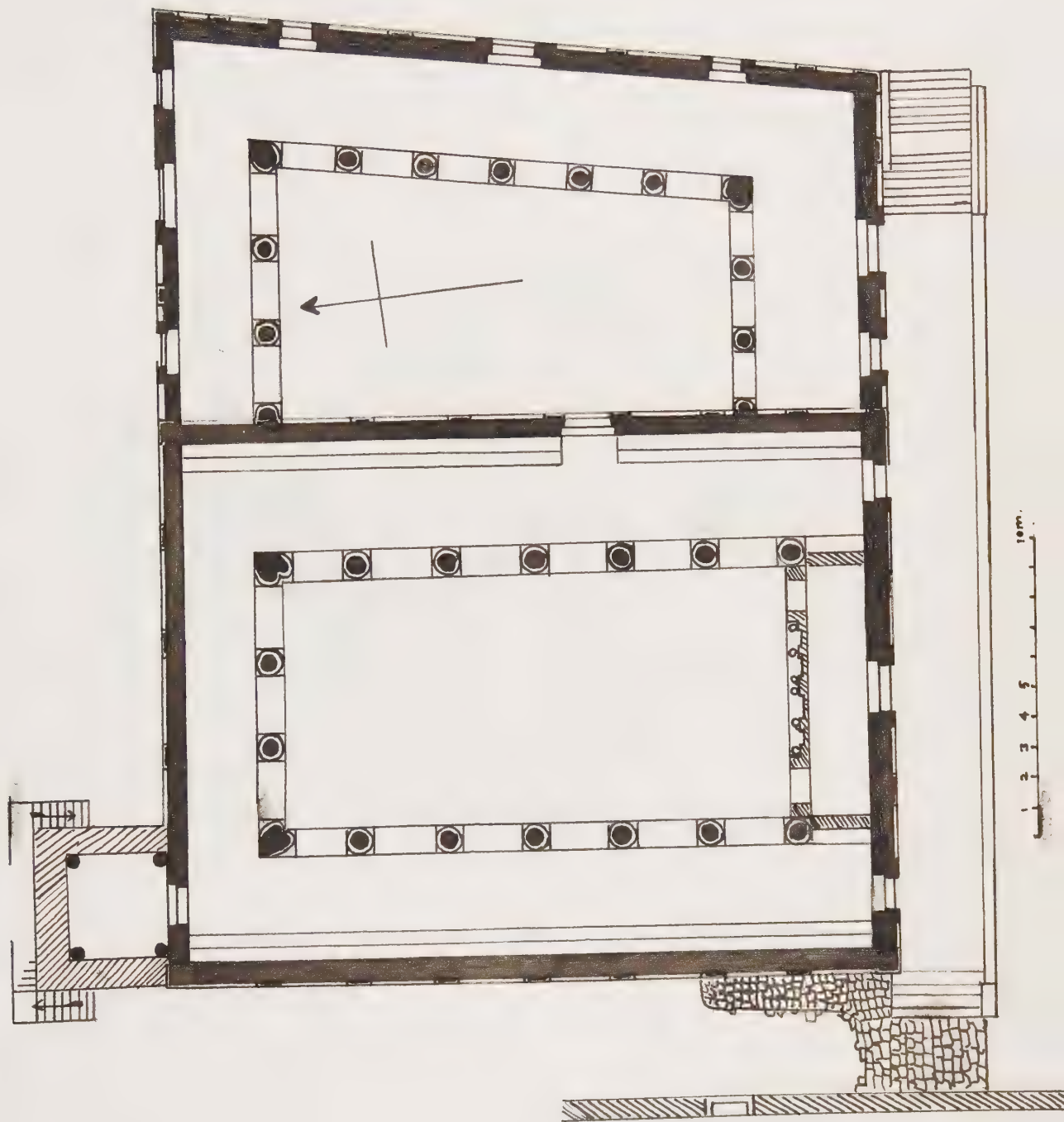


Fig. 7 -- Plan of synagogue at Tell Hûm

(Taken from Orfali, Capharnaum, pl. III)



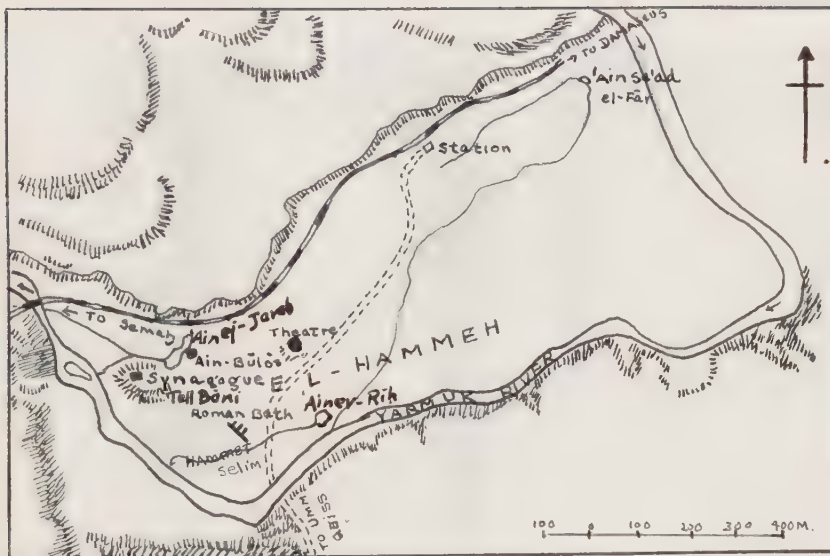


Fig. 8 -- Contour map of el-Hammi

(Taken from Sukenik, el-Hamme, p. 18)





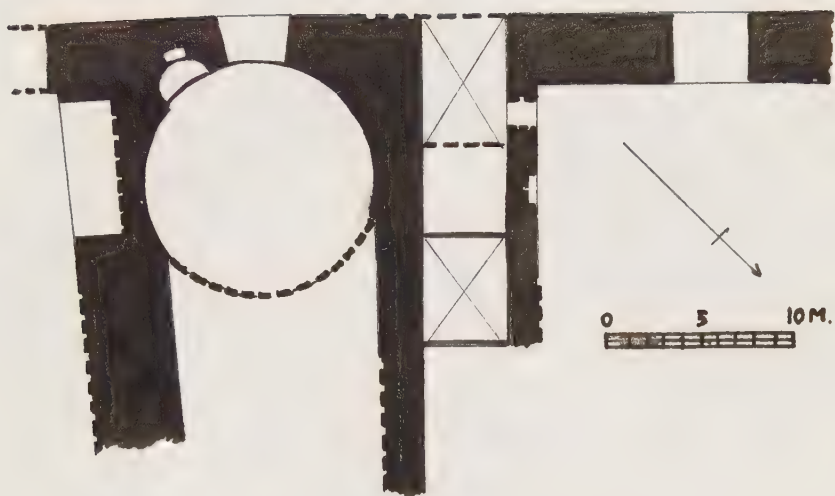


Fig. 9 -- Plan of the bath-house  
at el-Hammi

(Taken from Sukenik, el-Hammeh, p. 26)



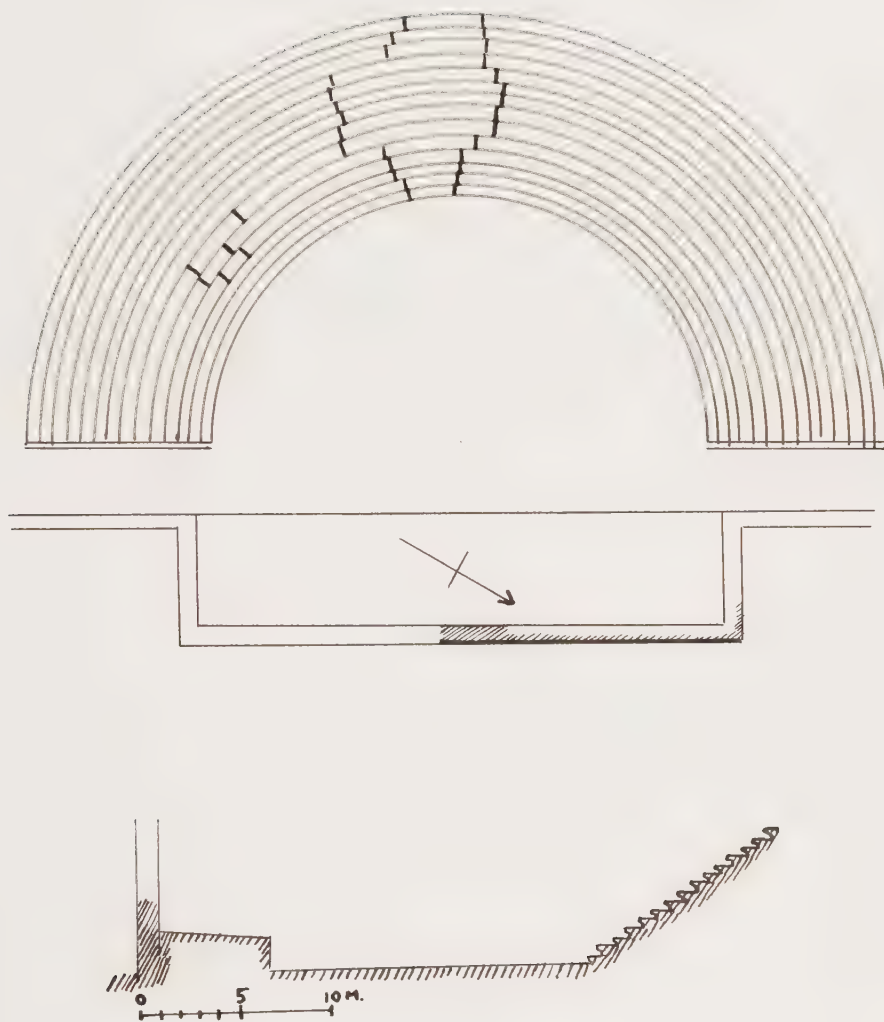


Fig. 10 -- Plan of the theater at el-Hammi  
(Taken from Sukenik, el-Hammeh, p. 29)





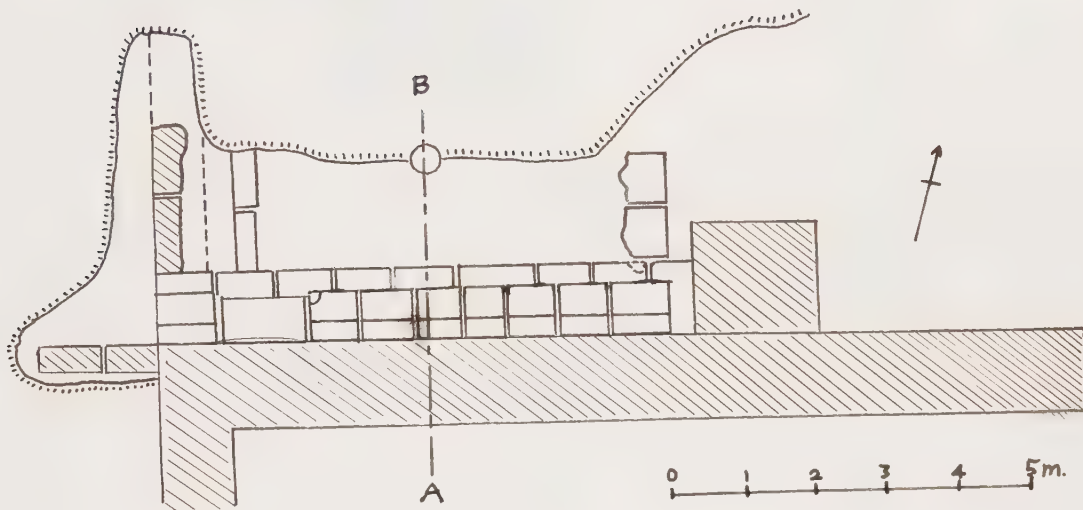


Fig. 11 -- Plan of the seats at el-Hamni

(Taken from QDAP, VI, p. 60)



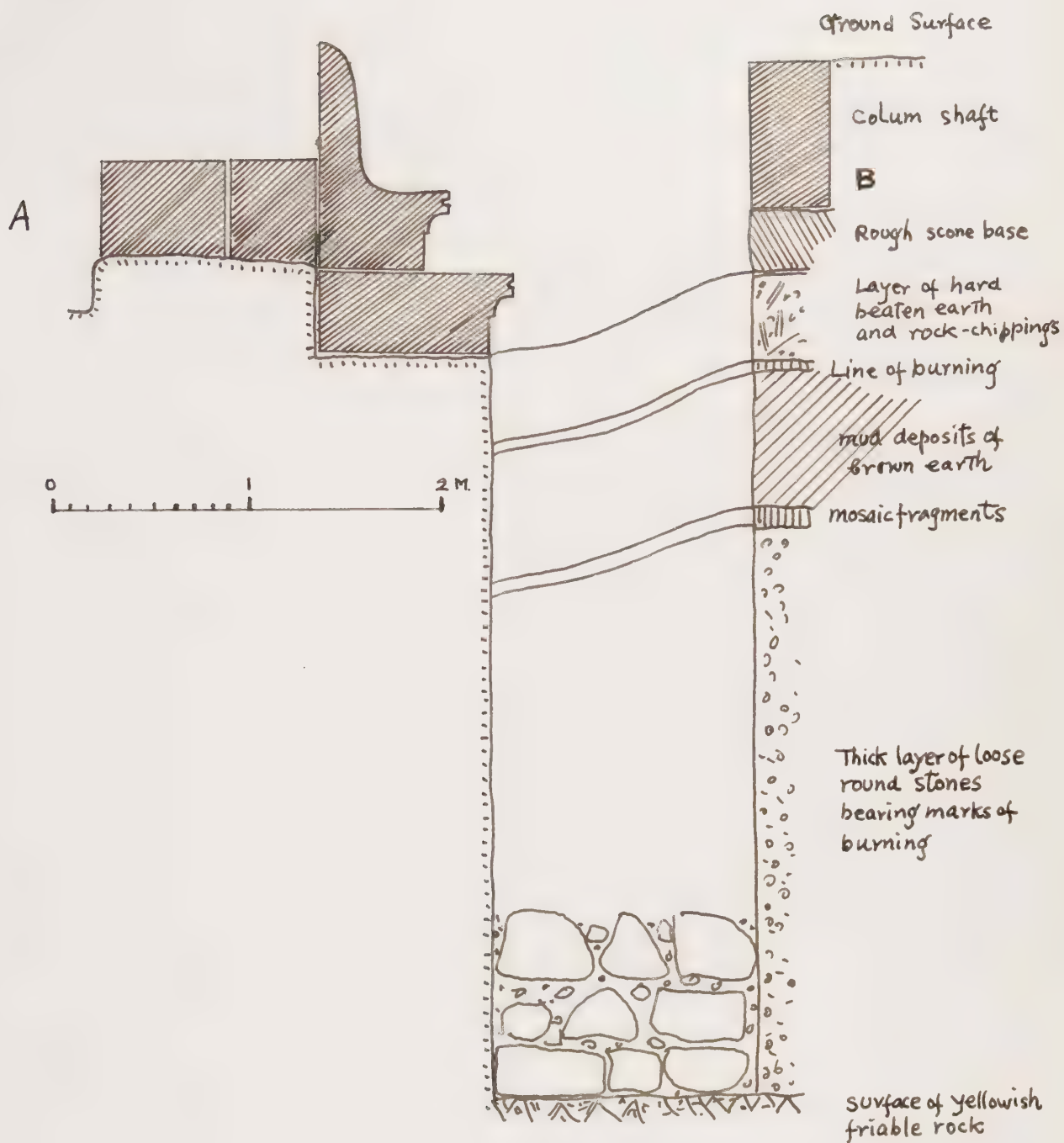


Fig. 12 -- Cross-section plan of the seats at el-Hammi

(Taken from QDAP, VI, p. 61)















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